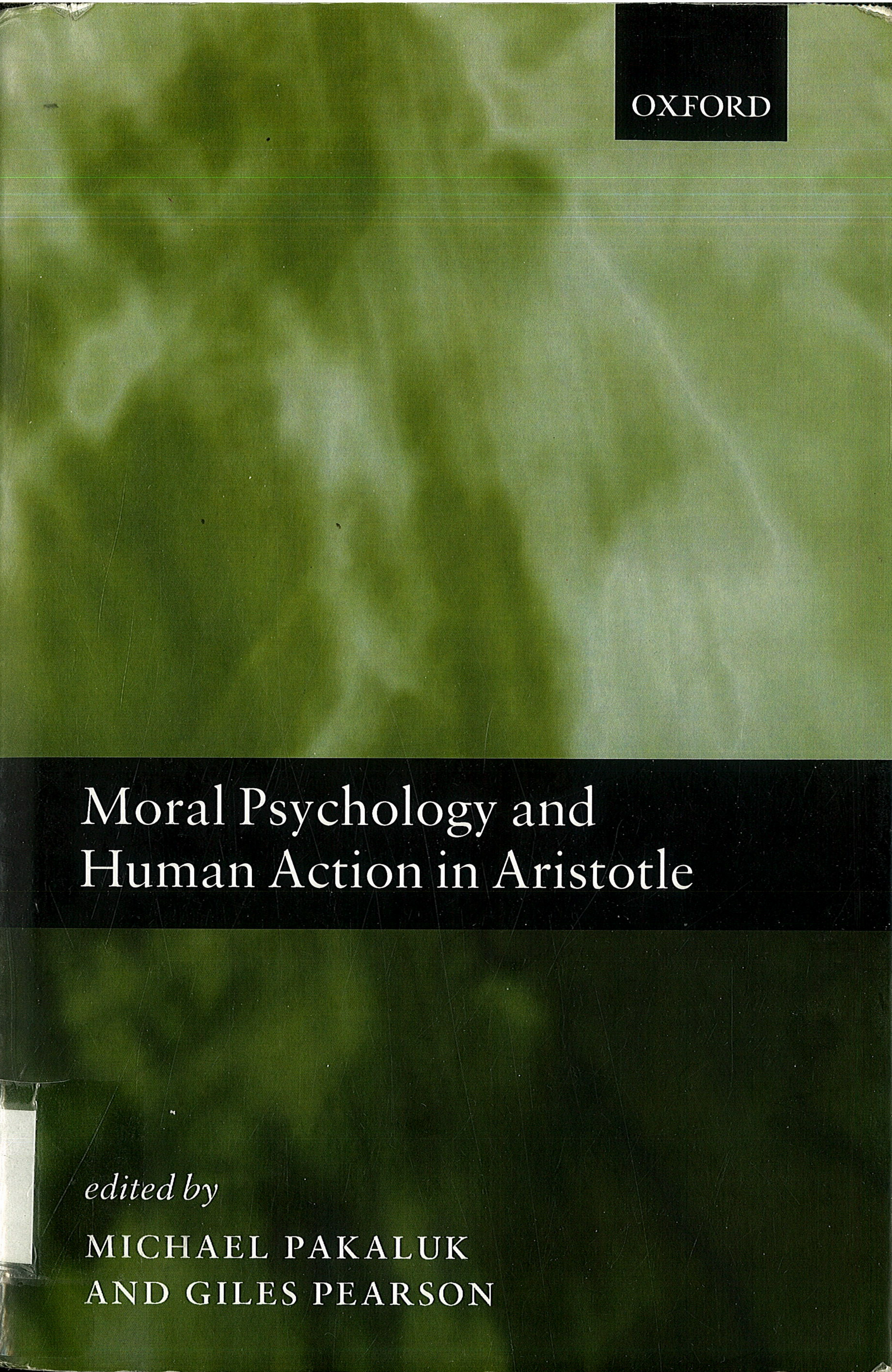

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Moral Psychology and Human Action in Aristotle

edited by

MICHAEL PAKALUK
AND GILES PEARSON

Both Aristotle and moral psychology have been flourishing areas of philosophical inquiry in recent years. This volume aims to bring the two streams of research together, offering a fresh infusion of Aristotelian insights into moral psychology and philosophy of action, and the application of developed philosophical sensibility as regards the reading of Aristotelian texts. The contributors offer stimulating new examinations of Aristotle's understanding of the various psychological states, dispositions, processes, and acts—including reasoning and deliberation—that contribute to the understanding of human action and its ethical appraisal.

CONTRIBUTORS

David Charles, Pierre Destrée, Jamie Dow, Robert Heinaman, Gavin Lawrence, Michael Pakaluk, Giles Pearson, Anthony Price, Malcolm Schofield, Heda Segvic.

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To Michael Sebastian Pakaluk and to the family of Giles Pearson

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List of Abbreviations

An. Po.	*Analytica Posteriora*
An. Pr.	*Analytica Priora*
Cat.	*Categoriae*
De An.	*De Anima*
De Int.	*De Interpretatione*
De Lin. Insec.	*De Lineis Insecabilibus*
De Mem.	*De Memoria et Reminiscentia*
De Motu	*De Motu Animalium*
Div per Somn.	*De Divinatione per Somnum*
EE	*Ethica Eudemia*
Gen. Anim.	*De Generatione Animalium*
Insomn.	*De Insomniis*
Meta.	*Metaphysica*
NE	*Ethica Nicomachea*
PA	*De Partibus Animalium*
Parm.	*Parmenides*
Parva Nat.	*Parva Naturalia*
Phys.	*Physica*
Poet.	*Poetica*
Pol.	*Politica*
Probl.	*Problemata*
Prot.	*Protagoras*
Rhet.	*Rhetorica*
Sen.	*De Sensu et Sensibili*
Somn.	*De Somno et Vigilia*
Soph. El.	*Sophistici Elenchi*
Top.	*Topica*

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Heda Segvic was a member of the Philosophy Department of the University of Pittsburgh when she passed away at an early age in 2003. Her essay is included with the gracious consent of her literary executor, Myles Burnyeat.

Introduction

One may suitably think of the original starting point for the papers collected here as Elizabeth Anscombe's well-known challenge to moral philosophers, in her influential article 'Modern Moral Philosophy', to place moral philosophy on a more solid foundation of moral psychology. Anscombe's challenge roughly coincided with a renewed interest in Aristotle in the analytic tradition, largely driven by Gilbert Ryle, J. L. Austin, and John Ackrill. These two movements combined fruitfully and led to a flowering of work in moral psychology in an Aristotelian spirit, of which Anscombe's own work, *Intention*, remains one of the best examples ('the most important treatment of action since Aristotle', according to Donald Davidson).

But in the intervening years it might be argued that the two sources of impetus in the late 1950s, originally contributing to a single philosophical project, have since separated again, under the pressure to specialize in academia. Philosophers who work on action theory or philosophical psychology, and ancient philosophers who look at Aristotelian ethics, have to a large extent gone their separate ways. We believe that it is time, then, for a reconsideration: for a fresh infusion of Aristotelian insights into moral psychology and philosophy of action, and for the application of developed philosophical sensibility as regards the reading of Aristotelian texts.

On some understandings of 'moral psychology', of course, nearly the whole of Aristotle's *Ethics* would count as such. But we aim to pick out something that is both narrower and broader than Aristotle's ethical thought: narrower, in that we are not aiming to provide essays that cover the standard topics one will find in the multiple, and admittedly valuable, 'companions' or 'guidebooks' to Aristotle's *Ethics*; broader, in that this volume is not restricted to topics located in the ethical treatises. Instead, we are concerned with Aristotle's understanding of the various psychological states, dispositions, processes, and acts—including reasoning and deliberation—that contribute to the understanding of human action and its ethical appraisal. For this purpose our authors draw not only on Aristotle's ethical writings, but also from his psychological works, especially, *De Anima* and *De Motu Animalium*, and from the rich account of the emotions in the *Rhetoric*.

The papers collected here, new for this volume,[1] form something of a complete thread of Aristotle's views on moral psychology. They move from Aristotle's accounts of psychological states and processes crucially important for action (pleasure, emotion, desire), to capacities and processes preliminary to action (imagination, deliberation), to action itself and its assessment ('weakness of will', intention, and 'double effect'), and finally to character and its formation through education, upbringing, and the agent's own choices.

The first essay, by Robert Heinaman, is on pleasure, suitably enough ('Pleasure as an Activity in the *Nicomachean Ethics*'). Anscombe remarked that the topic baffled the ancients and 'reduced Aristotle to babble'; Heinaman in a sense considers whether that is really so by addressing two related sets of difficulties in Aristotle's discussion of pleasure: problems pertaining to how, on Aristotle's view, pleasure can be an 'activity' rather than a 'change', and problems in his account of the differences in species of pleasure. As regards the former, Heinaman argues that Aristotle's treatment of examples is not fully in accord with his distinctions. As regards the latter, since Aristotle provides no general account of what fixes the species of pleasure, Heinaman attempts various ingenious reconstructions, initially plausible in themselves and apparently Aristotelian in spirit, none of which, however, proves to be entirely successful. So even if Aristotle didn't quite babble, still, we remain baffled: Heinaman does the service of stating the problems with characteristic precision and in a way that will surely be a starting point for others.

Taking the baton of pleasure (and pain), Jamie Dow next asks, in Chapter 2 ('Aristotle's Theory of the Emotions: Emotions as Pleasures and Pains'), whether Aristotle's account of the emotions in *Rhet.* 2.1–11 amounts to something that we might wish to call a 'theory' of the emotions, and, if so, whether that theory is still credible. Aristotle does have a distinctive and indeed intriguing theory, according to Dow: to have an emotion is to experience (one kind of) pain, pleasure, or both, which is intentional and representational, that is, which is directed at the emotion's object, involving the representation of the object in ways that provide grounds for the particular emotion experienced. Dow closes his essay by delineating some philosophical advantages which this account enjoys in relation to some influential modern accounts of emotions.

One might raise the question of how emotion, and especially desire, serves as a precursor to human action at all for Aristotle, and one's first attempts to reply to this question are liable to be set within a context governed by Cartesianism—if we either attribute a naive dualism to Aristotle, or take him to be an early proponent of views which historically arose in reaction to Cartesianism, such as materialism and functionalism. In Chapter 3, through careful reflection on texts from *De Anima* and *De Motu*, David Charles ('Desire in action: Aristotle's Move') aims to recover 'a very different vantage point' which indeed 'calls into question the Cartesian map which most current philosophers and interpreters use to navigate in this area'. On Charles' anti-Cartesian reading, 'when desire moves the body with an instrument, it does so because... it is an inextricably psycho-physical (hylomorphic) process, the realization of an essentially hylomorphic capacity to desire'.

---

[1] With two caveats: an earlier version of David Charles' Chapter 3 (Charles 2009b) has been revised substantially for this volume, but any areas of overlap are published with permission of DeGruyter. Heda Segvic's contribution (Chapter 7) was originally pledged by Myles Burnyeat for this volume. Since that time it has appeared, with our permission, in a collection of Segvic's writings.

That is one way, then, of bringing Aristotle to bear on contemporary questions, namely, recovering in his treatment of a problem a fresh and, for us, perhaps, difficult view of mind–body unity, which we might not otherwise have seen or appreciated: to open up a new philosophical space in the discussion of an old problem. Another would be to develop Aristotle's view on a subject in such a way that it can be placed head-to-head against and compared with a contemporary view on its own merits. This is what Giles Pearson attempts in his 'Aristotle and Scanlon on Desire and Motivation' in Chapter 4, where he considers Aristotle's account of the role of desires in the motivation of action, using Thomas Scanlon's account as something of a stalking horse. Aristotle and Scanlon both think that the source of motivation is *what agents see as good* about their acting in the way in question: Scanlon, however, identifies this with perceived reasons, whereas Aristotle identifies it with the object of desire, which, he thinks, can be grasped not just through belief, but also through *phantasia* ('construal' or 'appearance'). Pearson argues that Aristotle's account has the benefit of enabling him to explain animal desire; but also, and more significantly, it enables him to acknowledge a range of non-rational desiderative responses in human beings that Scanlon's account misses.

With Malcolm Schofield's essay ('*Phantasia* in *De Motu Animalium*') in Chapter 5, attention is turned to another psychological capacity relevant to action. Dow and Pearson in their discussions of emotion and desire noted the importance of Aristotle's appeal to the work of *phantasia*; Schofield considers the capacity itself. The essay contributes significantly to our understanding of *phantasia* by attending to passages in *De Motu* that concern the role of *phantasia* in animal locomotion. In particular, Schofield argues that Aristotle's claim that the organic parts are prepared by affections, they by desire, and desire by *phantasia* (and the latter in turn having its origins in thinking or sense-perception), has been much misunderstood. On Schofield's view, Aristotle is not claiming (as many have thought) that all desire is prepared by *phantasia* (in contrast to, say, perception or thinking); rather, he is reminding us of the place *phantasia* occupies in a certain kind of causal chain he has just mentioned, in which phantasia signifies something like 'visualization', and sits alongside perception and thought as 'triggers' of animal movement; and then adding a gloss about what might prompt *phantasia* (as 'visualization') to arise in its turn.

Chapters 6 and 7 then consider Aristotle's understanding of the distinctively human capacity for reckoning in advance of action, 'deliberation' (*bouleusis*), looking at this capacity both from its starting point (the 'end' or 'ends' of an action) and from its conclusion ('choice'). Anthony Price in Chapter 6 ('Aristotle on the Ends of Deliberation') offers an extended reflection on a remark of Aristotle which has long puzzled commentators, that 'virtue makes the target right, and practical wisdom the things toward it' (1144a7–9). Is virtue's 'making the target right' accomplished through some kind of a brute, non-rational opting (implying a view like Hume's that, 'Reason is, and ought only to be, the slave of the passions'), or does reason, or reasoning of some kind, play a role even in the representation of the end, and, if so, how? Price's essay is especially noteworthy for its resoluteness in casting that old problem in its most troubling forms, and for its subtlety in arguing that Aristotelian texts do not really support any of the too easy resolutions which tempt us.

Heda Segvic's essay in Chapter 7 ('Deliberation and Choice in Aristotle') in its main emphasis nicely complements Price's essay. Both essays argue against the attribution to Aristotle of a Humean view according to which, in practical reasoning, the end is set down non-rationally, and reason's only role is instrumental in relation to that end. But whereas Price's concern is more to make room for reason in the setting down of the end, Segvic's is mainly to explain how Aristotelian deliberation is not merely instrumental reasoning. The essay, in doing so, is a tour de force in giving us a tour of the land, as it helps us get straight and put in right relation to one another, in Aristotle's account, the crucial notions of choice (*prohairesis*), wish (or 'rational wanting', *boulēsis*), practical wisdom (*phronēsis*), and happiness (*eudaimonia*).

As mentioned, one important benefit of the project of this volume, of looking at issues in ethics in Aristotle from the viewpoint of moral psychology, is that it encourages us to examine anew texts that appear to deal 'merely' with psychology, for fresh insight into ethics. Thus Dow's essay turned to the *Rhetoric* for insight, ultimately, into the role of emotions in virtues of character, and Schofield's essay looked at *phantasia* in relation to the account in *De Motu*. Along similar lines, David Charles, in a second contribution to this volume (Chapter 8, '*Akrasia*: The Rest of the Story?'), looks to texts *other* than the famous discussion in *NE* 7.3 for insight into the phenomenon of *akrasia* or 'weakness of will', which enables him to discuss *akrasia* from a higher level of generality. Charles's two essays are complementary, as each attacks a kind of dualism. Whereas the first was aimed at breaking out of a post-Cartesian framework in construing Aristotle on desire, this second contribution aims to break out of a post-Humean framework in construing Aristotle on practical reasoning. The alternatives in that framework appear to be either an 'intellectualism' which holds, implausibly, that intellectual understanding is sufficient to account for action, or a dualism which, unattractively, decomposes practical reasoning into 'two independent components' of understanding and desiring. Although he concedes that his essay is programmatic, Charles believes he has said enough to indicate that one may find in Aristotle 'an account of the issues not dreamed of by most post-Humean philosophers and commentators'.

With Michael Pakaluk's essay in Chapter 9, 'Mixed Actions and Double Effect', the discussion turns to issues of responsibility for action, and grounds for praise and blame. Pakaluk maintains that Aristotle's treatment of 'necessitated' or 'mixed' actions in *NE* 3.1 wishes to deal with the same class of actions which, in the casuistical tradition, and later in action theory, have been looked at through the lens of 'Double Effect'. Thus a comparison is possible, and furthermore that comparison proves revealing, because Aristotle's discussion, unlike contemporary considerations of Double Effect, is not developed with a view to refuting or ultimately vindicating consequentialism. When situated in an Aristotelian context, he claims, Double Effect type considerations may be correctly recognized as pervasive and unavoidable for practical reasoning, and their appropriate role and force may be better appreciated; furthermore, Aristotle's approach correctly places due weight, in assigning praise or blame, on the assessment of what the agent *wants*—attending not solely to what he *wishes* or *wills*.

The volume's final two essays turn to the development of character, both how we acquire it, and our responsibility for the character we have acquired. Gavin Lawrence in Chapter 10, ('Acquiring Character: Becoming Grown-Up'), gives an exceptionally nuanced account, with attention to distinctively human capacities and manners, of what is implicit in Aristotle's remarks on character acquisition, considering such diverse questions as what it means to have full human character at all; how human agency combines aspects of both assessment and desire (both of which must be taught); how exactly the initially non-rational aspect of the human soul may become 'rationally illuminated or sensitive'; how 'habituation' is not some crude sort of 'training' or 'conditioning'; the differing roles of guidance and imitation; what 'pleasure' and 'pain' mean relative to character acquisition; and the importance of 'the fine'. To gain a sense of the depth of his treatment, consider simply some phrases in his essay which contain the word 'learning': 'learning to read', 'learning to hold a pencil', 'learning from my mistake', 'learning the steps of a dance', 'learning to speak', 'learning to play a game', 'learning to control our appetites', 'learning to cope with certain situations'. When in an offhand comment Lawrence, correcting an underestimation we are liable to make of our own powers, asks the reader to consider 'the immediate judgments—or if that is too grand, the immediate "take", or "getting" (see *Philosophical Investigations* 146a)—we all make, however provisionally (our running case-book), on meeting new people, especially for example the immediate read of a person when hitch-hiking: the antennae of what we "smell" outruns our intellect... We are struck by the incredible sense of smell of dogs (or sharks): yet fail to acknowledge—to take into our reflection—our own incredibly sophisticated discriminatory powers'—the reader might wish, by thinking about human nature with Lawrence, to acquire something of the discriminatory power on display in his essay.

Finally in Chapter 11 Pierre Destrée ('Aristotle on Responsibility for One's Character'), through a careful examination of certain key phrases and terms in Aristotle, and of what Aristotle says about the conditions of praise and blame, argues that Aristotle was not a 'compatibilist', that is, did not hold that we can be held responsible, and praised or blamed, insofar as someone or something else determines us. But then how can we be responsible for our character, if it is formed in childhood through education and training, for which our parents and teachers are ostensibly responsible? In an appealingly dialectical discussion, Destrée draws out what he takes to be Aristotle's considered view of the matter, namely, that what is imparted to us in childhood is provisional, and we are capable of embracing or rejecting this as we enter adulthood, and meant to do so, through critical reflection and self-examination—and thus he completes the 'thread' binding together the volume.

We have drawn attention largely to the content of the various essays in this volume, but it would be unjust not to mention also, and praise, their diversity of effective approach, method, and manner. Place together essays which show the accuracy and clarity of a Robert Heinaman, the seemingly effortless mastery of scholarship of a Malcolm Schofield, the astonishing new vistas opened up by patient reflections such as those of a David Charles, and the ingenious honesty about ordinary life of a Gavin Lawrence, and it seems clear that Aristotle's moral psychology and philosophy of human action is worth studying, too, for the diverse and admirable intellectual virtues which it evidently requires and elicits.

1

Pleasure as an Activity in the *Nicomachean Ethics*

Robert Heinaman

In this chapter I wish to address two interconnected sets of problems in Aristotle's discussion of pleasure in the *Nicomachean Ethics*: (1) difficulties which arise in understanding how pleasure can be an activity as opposed to a change; and (2) difficulties in his account of differences in species of pleasure. (1) is no news but I go into the problems in greater depth than others have done. (2) does appear to be news. W. F. R. Hardie said that *NE* 10's account of different species of pleasure 'does not raise any special problems of interpretation in detail' (Hardie 1980: 314), and other commentators have not noted any serious problems.

The notion of an activity in the sense in which it is contrasted with change is, clearly, of central importance in Aristotle's philosophy. Yet, apart from a line or two here or there, the entire corpus of Aristotle's writings contains a total of about two pages devoted to explaining activities. And the longest of these discussions, in *Nicomachean Ethics* 10, largely specifies the characteristics of change that are to be contrasted with the characteristics of activities. This lack of information on the notion of an activity is, presumably, partly responsible for the fact that there are a number of problems in understanding what sort of entity it is supposed to be, and in understanding how particular examples satisfy its general characteristics. These problems are the focus of the present chapter. I will in effect be supporting Ackrill's (1965) view that Aristotle's treatment of examples is not in accordance with his distinction, though not for some of the reasons Ackrill thought.

While accounts of pleasure are found in both *NE* 7 and *NE* 10, I will focus on Book 10 since I do not believe that the activity/change distinction was fully developed when Aristotle wrote Book 7. But the main concern of both books is the same: to defend the value of pleasure and its importance for a happy life. The contention that pleasures differ in species is made in response to arguments appealing to the existence of shameful pleasures which are alleged to show that pleasure has no value. Since, Aristotle replies, there are good pleasures different in species from bad pleasures, the existence of shameful pleasures cannot show that pleasure is not a good or important for a happy life.

If we are to understand Aristotle's position, then, we have to understand how the identity and difference in species of pleasures is determined—otherwise there will be no basis for judging that pleasures differ in species and value, and much of his defence of the value of pleasure will be undermined. Commentators have taken it for granted that Aristotle is entitled to differentiate pleasures as he does without explaining how the differences are to be drawn. This is one of the questions I propose to discuss here. How does Aristotle distinguish species of pleasure? Does he have a coherent position?

While making explicit claims about particular examples of pleasures, Aristotle offers no general account of what fixes the species of pleasure. He does relate pleasures to certain 'entity-types' or categories. First of all, as is well known, *NE* 10 asserts that pleasure is an activity and is not a change. If so, then the place to begin to determine how species of pleasure are established might be to look at how species of activity are determined. But Aristotle provides no general account of species of activity either. On the other hand, he has a good deal to say about the specific identity of changes, and we might hope to gain some indirect understanding of the specific identity of activities by looking at how they differ from changes. But in fact, I will argue, this does not get us far.

More help should be forthcoming from examining the close connection Aristotle draws between pleasure on the one hand and thought and perception on the other. Pleasure, Aristotle asserts in Book 10, is a derivative entity in that, though different from, it always supervenes on another activity. I will assume here that this other entity on which a pleasure supervenes is either perception or thought.[1, 2] Book 10 (1175b32–3) also affirms that pleasure and the activity

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[1] *NE* 10.1–5's explanation of pleasure is an explanation of what it is to enjoy perceiving or thinking (*NE* 1174b14–26, b33–1175a1). On the point that pleasure supervenes on pleasure or thought I agree with the view of Bostock (1988; 2000: 162), though not with his justification for it. (His interpretation of some difficult passages in *NE* VII on 'curative' pleasures makes the soul alone the subject of perception, whereas Aristotle understands perception to be a kind of composite of form and matter that is common to body and soul.) After pointing out that it is debatable whether a pleasure is the same as the activity on which it supervenes, Aristotle affirms that, nevertheless, 'pleasure does not seem to be *thought* or *perception*' (1175b34–5). This explains how one can enjoy refraining from doing something (*NE* 1104b5–8, *Pol.* 1263b9–10) since one can perceive that one has refrained from an action.

My own view is that in *NE* 7 Aristotle, while denying that pleasure is a coming to be, has no clear distinction between change and activity, and consequently is willing to call at least some pleasures changes as well as actualities. This is connected to the fact that in Book 7 Aristotle, like Plato, fails to distinguish between enjoyment and its object (for example, the distinction between the pleasure I experience in gambling and the gambling itself). *NE* 10.3.1173b7–9 marks Book 10's clear recognition of that distinction. There Aristotle points out that a change in the body such as replenishment cannot be pleasure since the soul is the subject of pleasure.

[2] I do not assume that thoughts and perceptions are the only activities other than pleasure. I do believe that, for Aristotle, all activities are mental events (Heinaman 1990: 92–8); and that all

on which it supervenes, though distinct, are so similar that it is debatable whether they are the same or different. If so, if a pleasure is *that like* the perception or thought on which it supervenes, then it seems reasonable to assume that anything Aristotle says or implies about the specific identity of thought and perception should also throw light on the species of the pleasure that supervenes on it. This will be one of the primary ways, then, in which we might try to understand specific identity for pleasure: it will be derivative on the specific identity of the perceptions and thoughts on which pleasures supervene. And as Aristotle does have some things to say on the latter question, this source provides some help on understanding species of pleasure.

However, as we shall see, there are serious problems in Aristotle's account. As I will explain below, I have not been able to organize Aristotle's various statements on the issues to be discussed into a coherent whole. But I hope that my own failure might stimulate others to succeed in doing so.

1. Differences between activity and change

Since Aristotle characterizes pleasure as a kind of activity, and explains what activities are by contrasting them with changes, I will begin by setting out the differences which he draws between activity and change.[3] The italicized claims about activities create difficulties which will be discussed in the following sections of the paper.

1. A change has a 'path' from the starting point to the end point of the change,[4] where the path is an infinitely divisible continuous magnitude.[5] The path is divisible into infinitely many stretches and infinitely many points or features on the path. An activity has no path.

The fundamental difference between activity and change is the fact that a change is and an activity is not associated with a path. The path of a change is the 'stretch' or 'distance' connecting the feature *from which* (τὸ ἐξ οὗ, ἡ ἀρχή) the subject changes and the feature *to which* (τὸ εἰς ὅ, ἡ τελευτή) it changes. For example, if a subject walks from A to B, the path is the magnitude from place A to place B. Setting aside substantial changes, for Aristotle there are three types of change: alterations between qualities, locomotions between places, and

---

actions, including those which are actualities of virtue of character, are changes (Heinaman 1996: 75–94).

[3] Further discussion of many of the following points can be found in Heinaman (1995 and 1998). I will ignore the peculiar characteristics of alterations discussed in the second paper.

[4] τὸ διάστημα, Aristotle's term for the interval or distance from starting point to end point (*Phys.* 223a1, 237b35, 238a7, 16).

[5] *Phys.* 6.1, 231b21–232a4; 6.4; 6.6, 237a25–8.

growth or diminution between quantities. The properties of a change are derivative on the characteristics of its path.

By contrast, there is no path from one feature to another that the subject of an activity moves between. Examples of activities are thinking of god, seeing red and hearing A flat. The path of a change is divisible into stretches limited by features—qualities, places, or sizes—passed through and momentarily possessed by the subject of change. But an activity does not consist in a transition between features or the display of a series of features during its existence. To think of circularity is not to *be* circular nor *is* it to acquire or lose that or any other feature.

2. Hence, the subject of a change exhibits a series of momentary features—qualities, quantities, or places—during change.[6] The subject of an activity does not, in virtue of being the subject of that activity, exhibit any such features during the activity's existence.

3. At the conclusion of a change[7] its subject has a new feature which is the end point of the change, and has lost an old feature which was the starting point of the change. The subject of an activity does not, in virtue of being the subject of that activity, acquire or lose any such features.

4. A change is divisible into temporal parts but *an activity is not divisible into temporal parts* (*NE* 1174a17–19, b6–12).

A change is divisible into temporal parts because (1) the structure of a change is determined by the structure of its path,[8] and (2) the path of change is infinitely divisible into parts with magnitude; and so does not divide into indivisibles. (2) entails that the path itself must possess magnitude. Given (1), it follows that a change must itself be divisible into parts with an analogous temporal 'magnitude' where those parts occupy different times of the whole change's existence.

Lacking a path, there is no corresponding reason, nor any other basis, for dividing an activity into temporal parts. In *NE* 10.4 Aristotle calls a change a whole of parts (1174a23). But the same chapter (1174a17, b10–12), using a different sense of 'whole', asserts that, *because* it *is* divisible into parts, a change *is not* a whole in the way an activity is a whole. Since the point here is that changes are divisible because they are divisible into temporal parts, the contrast with activities means that an activity is a 'whole' in that it is not divisible into temporal parts. Hence, if an activity lasts for a period of time, since it lacks distinct temporal parts, it is not the case that different times of the activity's existence display different parts of the activity. 'All' of it is present throughout its existence.[9]

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[6] *Phys.* 234b6–7, 235b30–236a7, 239a14–16, 31–b3, 262a29–30, b20–1, 28–30, 263b9 21, 265a32–b1.

[7] Apart from circular locomotion.

[8] *Phys.* 207b21–5, 219a10–13, 220b24–6, 263a27–8; *Meta.* 1020a26–32.

5. A change is a continuum but an activity is not.

Since the structure of a change is determined by the structure of its path, and the path of a change is infinitely divisible, it follows that a change is not merely divisible into temporal parts, it is infinitely divisible. Hence a change is a continuum. An activity, of course, is not a continuum since it is not divisible into temporal parts at all.

6. The species of a whole change is divisible into species of parts of the change, which species (of the parts) differ from each other and the species of the whole. *The lowest species to which an activity belongs is not divisible into different species of parts of the activity* (*NE* 1174a14–b6).

If x changes from place 1 to place 100, then that change can be specified in more or less specific terms: as a *change*, or a *change of place*, or *walking*, or *walking from 1 to 100*, or *walking from 1 to 50 to 100*, and so on. Since, for Aristotle, changes are infinitely divisible, such specifications could theoretically go on forever, though Aristotle thinks that in fact we eventually could not make further discriminations in the space covered by the walk. The part of (6) concerning change is a consequence of thesis (1) and Aristotle's account of specific identity for change: the species of a change is determined by the path from its starting point to its end point, and changes x and y are one in species when their paths are specifically the same.[10] To apply this notion to the claim made in (6), Aristotle must extend the application of the terms 'starting point' and 'end point' to any of the features that are momentarily possessed during the course of a change, that is, to any points on the path from the proper starting point to the proper end point (cf. 228a31–b1). This is just what he does in *NE* 1174a30–4:

> For if locomotion is a change from one place to another, specific differences belong to it as well—flying, walking, leaping, and so on. However, not only in this way but also in walking itself <there are specific differences>. For the whence (starting point) and the

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[9] For a defence of this reading of *NE* 1174b6–12, see (Heinaman 1995: 202–3). *NE* 1174b6–12 cannot merely repeat the point of 1174a14–b6, that activities are specifically indivisible. For the point that activities are 'wholes', are indivisibles, is 1174b6–12's explanation of why pleasures may exist 'not in time' (1174b9). But the point that pleasures are *specifically* indivisible could not explain why they may exist not in time. For Aristotle, *resting in being F* is specifically indivisible but can only exist in time (*Phys.* 221b7–19, 234a31–b9, 239b1–2).

This is one respect in which activities, as Aristotle understands them, differ from activities in the sense understood by contemporary philosophers who purport to be following Aristotle when they contrast activities with accomplishments, achievements, and states (Ryle 1949; Vendler 1957)

[10] For Aristotle's account of generic, specific, and numerical identity for change, see *Phys.* 5.4 and 242a31–b8, 242a66–b1, 249a16–21, b12–14, 261b36–262a5; *NE* 10.4.

whither (end point) are not the same in the <whole> race course and in a part, nor in one part and another...

Aristotle thinks that there is a last moment of the period of rest preceding a change when the subject of change last possesses the starting point, and a first moment when the subject possesses the end point. Corresponding to the last moment of the period of rest and any moment in the period of change, or any pair of moments in the period of change, or any moment in the period of change and the first moment of the possession of the final end point, there will correspond a starting point and an end point in the extended senses. For every such different pair of moments there will be a different path, and as a result a different species of change. As there are an infinite number of pairs of moments and features that can be picked out, there are infinitely many species of change into which the whole change is divisible.

All activities are homogeneous in the sense that when a lowest species of activity A is occurring, 'A' is—with regard to characterizing its species—the finest description of the occurrence for any stretch of the time which it occupies. If Jones sees the colour red for a stretch of time, then that activity can be described as *perceiving, seeing, seeing a colour, seeing red, perceiving crimson.* It is not clear where Aristotle thinks the lowest species of colour is reached,[11] but suppose that he thinks that *perceiving crimson* is the specifically finest description available. That activity is not divisible into other species of activity as walking from S to E divides into walking from S to C and walking from C to E. The walk from S to E can of course be described as 'walking' throughout its existence, but that change can also be described more finely in terms of specifically different descriptions that apply to different temporal parts of the walk—walking from S to C, walking from C to E. No such differentiations can be drawn in the case of activities. Further, an activity has no temporal parts, and hence there are no parts of the activity that could be assigned the non-existent parts of the species of the activity.

7. The subject of a change is divisible into parts with magnitude. The subject of an activity is not divisible into parts with magnitude.[12]

8. A change is divisible into different changes belonging to the different parts of the subject of change.[13] An activity is not divisible into different activities belonging to different parts of the subject of the activity.

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[11] He thinks that there is only a finite number of species of colour (*Parva Nat.* 440b23–4, 442a19–25, 445a20–9, 446b16–20; *Phys.* 227b7–11; *De Caelo* 299a20–4; *Top* 127a20–5). (See also Heinaman 1998: 230n6).

[12] *Phys.* 234b10–20, 240b8–241a26. See 225a31, 242a40, 47–8, 257a33–b1, b25, 267a22–3. Also compare Plato's argument at *Parm.* 138d-e. This point is not important for the present paper. My view is that Aristotle regards the soul, a spatially indivisible entity, as the proper subject of activities (Heinaman 1990: 94–8).

[13] *Phys.* 234b22–235a9, 240b13–14.

9. Suppose Xing is a genus or species of change. Then when O is Xing (or Xes) it is not the case that O has Xed. *If Xing is a kind of activity, then when O Xes at the same time it has Xed.*[14]

'O' has Xed' reports that the end of the Xing has been reached. The end of a change is its end point, which is a limit of and not a part of the change. Hence, when the change is going on and O Xes or is Xing, it is not the case that O has Xed. But an activity is its own end, so when Xing is an activity O Xes and has Xed at the same time.

10. A change is incomplete or without its end (ἀτελής), its end point, as long as it exists. *An activity, being its own end, is complete as soon as it exists and throughout its existence* (*Meta.* 1048b21–2; *Phys.* 201b31, 257b8–9; *De An.* 417a16–17).

The end of a change is its end point, the quality, quantity, or place where it actually stops.[15] That end point does not exist as long as the change exists, and when the end point is achieved the change no longer exists. That is one way in which a change is incomplete. There is no such end point in the case of an activity, so an activity is not incomplete in that way.

11. A change is incomplete in that as long as it exists, there is more of it to come. *An activity is complete in that whenever it exists, 'all' of it exists.*

Since a change is a continuous magnitude spread out over time, different parts of the time the change occupies contain different parts of the change. So as long as the change lasts, there is more of it to come. But an activity is a temporally indivisible entity—a whole, as Aristotle says in *Nicomachean Ethics* 10.4—so all of it exists as soon as it exists; as, in an analogous way, 'all' of a point exists as soon as it exists.

12. A change is incomplete in that the species of a change is not determined as long as it exists; for as long as a change exists, its species depends on what happens later. *The species of an activity is determined as soon as it exists and does not depend on what happens later* (*NE* 1174a14–b7).

It is this third kind of incompleteness and completeness which Aristotle sets out at length in *NE* 10.4.

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[14] T. Penner's proposed translation (Penner 1970: 442) of *Meta.* 1048b32–4 obscures the fact that this point is made at *Meta.* 1048b30–5. He translates: 'It is a *different* (ἕτερον) [*distance* AB over which] one is moving and [AA' over which] one has moved [something]. Whereas one has seen and is seeing (is thinking and has thought) the same thing' (my italics, bracketed expressions added by Penner). In fact, Aristotle is speaking about difference in time (1048b30–5): *οὐ γὰρ ἅμα βαδίζει καὶ βεβάδικεν, οὐδ' οἰκοδομεῖ καὶ ᾠκοδόμηκεν, οὐδέ . . . ἀλλὰ ἕτερον, καὶ κινεῖ καὶ κεκίνηκεν· ἑώρακε δὲ καὶ ὁρᾷ ἅμα τὸ αὐτό, καὶ νοεῖ καὶ νενόηκεν.* Penner's translation omits the second occurrence of '*ἅμα*' (though it is translated on p. 456), and it is clear that '*ἕτερον*' is contrasted with '*ἅμα*', not with *τὸ αὐτό*.

[15] While an agent may have such an end as a goal, that is incidental to the notion of 'end' as used here by Aristotle, contrary to a widespread misunderstanding of Aristotle's point (See Heinaman 1995: 194–5; 1994: 211n5).

13. The numerical identity of change is undetermined until it is over. *The numerical identity of an activity is determined as soon as it exists.*

Different moments after the first moment of a period of change correspond to different possible end points in the path of change. Which possible end point turns out to be the actual end point is (at least typically) undetermined while the change exists. Consequently, which of the possible paths turn out to be the actual path when change occurs remains undetermined as long as the change exists. And since the species of a change is determined by its path, it follows, as asserted in (12), that the species of a change is undetermined as long as the change exists. Since Aristotle's conditions for the numerical identity of a change make its species essential to it, it follows that the numerical identity of a change is not determined until it is over. Aristotle never considers the identity conditions for activities, but since they are temporally partless and their species is determined as soon as they exist, as soon as they do exist, there is nothing further on which their numerical identity depends which will be revealed in the future.

14. The end of a change is a limit of the change. When a change reaches its end it must cease. So a change cannot be continued indefinitely. *The end of an activity is not a limit of it, and an activity can continue indefinitely.*[16]

15. A change can be fast or slow but *an activity cannot be fast or slow.*[17]

Since speed is determined by the time taken to cover a path, and activities have no path, there is no question of their having any speed.

16. A change does not exist in or at a moment, but an activity does exist in a moment.[18]

Since a change is an entity with temporal magnitude, something *spread out over* time, it cannot be squeezed into a moment. Being temporally indivisible, an activity, like *being F* (*Phys.* 262a30), does exist in a moment.

17. A change exists only if it exists for a period of time. *It is possible for an activity to exist at one moment and at no other moment or time.*[19]

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[16] The end point of a change is a limit of the change: 207a14–15, 234b11–12, 236a10–13; *De Caelo* 269a21–2; *Meta.* 994b15–16, 999b9–10, 1022a4–7, 1055a12–16, 1090b10; *Pol.* 1257b28. Beyond the end point of change no part of the change exists: 236a7–13, 265a29–32; *Meta.* 1022a4–7, 1055a12–16. See *Meta.* 1048b25–7. Of course, Aristotle regards circular locomotion as the one exception to (14)'s claim about change.

[17] *Phys.* 218b14, 222b31–3, 232b20–2, 234a25–6; *NE* 1173a31–b4.

[18] *Phys.* 234a24–31. See 222b30–223a15, 237a14 and 239b1–2.

[19] *NE* 1174a19–21, 1174b7–9. Penner (1970: 426) argued that Aristotle is not committed to the possibility of instantaneous activities. Rather, he suggested the following interpretation: 'while moving cannot be taking place in a now—if there is to be moving in a now there will have to be [impossibly] a movement from some [starting point] to some [end point] in a now—pleasure *can* take place in a now since the conditions of identity for pleasures are not given in terms of any' starting points or end points. But neither are the conditions of identity for rest given in terms of any starting points or end points, yet Aristotle holds that rest cannot take place in a now: see n. 9 above.

Since, for Aristotle, any entity not existing forever does not exist in time only if it exists for one and only one moment, *NE* 10.4's statement that an activity can exist not in time can only mean that an activity can exist for one and only one moment. This cannot be true, of course, of a change since any change is spread out over time and can no more be squeezed into a moment than a magnitude can be squeezed into a point.

18. There is no first or last time—moment or period—of a change's existence. There is a first and last moment of an activity's existence (*Phys.* 236a13–36).

19. If Xing is a change, then necessarily if O Xes O has Xed before O Xes; and necessarily if O has Xed O Xes before O has Xed. If Xing is an activity, then if O Xes it may be that O has not Xed before O Xes; and if O has Xed then it may be that O does not X before O has Xed. (*Phys.* VI.6).

20. There is generation of change. *There is no generation of an activity* (*NE* 1174b9–14).

For a change to be is for its different temporal phases to *come to be* one after the other (*τῷ ἀεὶ ἄλλο καὶ ἄλλο γίγνεσθαι;* cf. *Phys.* 206a21–3). So if I walk from A to B to C to D, then for the walk from A to D to exist is for the phase from A to B to 'come to be' and then pass away, then for the phase from B to C to 'come to be' and then pass away, and so forth. The same holds for other entities which

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Sarah Broadie's explanation of the claim at 1174b7–9 is that 'getting pleased does not require a length of time; but...movement in a now is impossible' (Broadie and Rowe 2002: 435). It is not clear whether 'getting pleased' refers to (i) the *transition to* pleasure or (ii) *pleasure*. If, improbably, she meant (i), then the only legitimate object of contrast is, not change, but the *transition to* change. But then there is no contrast: the transition to change is just like the transition to pleasure in taking no time. Suppose then that she intends to contrast (ii) with movement on the grounds that pleasure is possible in a now but movement is not. Then it is not clear exactly what she means, but if she means that, while any activity must last for a time, it takes no 'time' to get from the beginning to the end of the activity because it has no such beginning or end, her use of the notions of *existing in time* and consequently *existing not in time* conflicts with Aristotle's use. Consider *being F*. For Aristotle it too is a temporally partless entity and it takes no time to get from the 'beginning' to the 'end' of *being F* (see *Phys.* 239a33–5, 262a29–31, b20–1). Nevertheless, as Aristotle understands the notion, if a particular instance of *being F* lasts for a period of time, there is, for Aristotle, no sense in which that instance of *being F* does not exist *in time*.

Bostock (2000: 151) agrees with Gosling and Taylor (1982: 311–12) that Aristotle means merely that, unlike a change, an activity can be said to occur at an instant though it must last for a period of time. But this too conflicts with the *Physics'* definition of *existing in time*. (Something exists *in time* just in case (1) its entire existence is surrounded by time when it does not exist [*Phys.* 221a16–18, 26–30, b3–5, 221b28–222a4], and (2) its existence is measured by time [*Phys.* 221a4–9, b5, 14–16, 27, 30–1]. So a non-eternal entity exists not in time only if its existence cannot be measured by time, which holds for non-eternal entities only if they exist for one and only one moment [*Phys.* 262b20–1; see 239a33–5, 262a29–31]). In the immediately preceding passage (1174a19-b5) Aristotle discusses change at length. The passage begins by claiming that 'every change is in time', accords in all respects with what is said in the *Physics*, and refers readers to the *Physics* (1174b2–3) for a more accurate discussion of change. So there is no plausibility in the suggestion that 1174b7–9 uses a notion of *existing in time* other than that found in the *Physics*.

possess only temporal parts such as days, contests, and time itself.[20] Similarly, a change is divisible into parts that occupy the different periods of the time when it exists. For it to exist is for these parts to exist one after the other as the temporal phases go by. So for a change to be *is* for it to 'come to be'. An activity lacks any temporal parts and therefore its existence does not consist in such different parts coming to be one after another—there is in this sense no generation of activities.

2. Activities as mental events

The claims about activities, in particular pleasure, which Aristotle emphasizes in *NE* 10.4 are claims about the species or kinds to which activities belong:

(6) The lowest species to which an activity belongs is not divisible into different species of parts of the activity and

(12) The species of an activity is determined as soon as it exists and does not depend on what happens later.

In the case of change, Aristotle's position on specific identity is fairly clear: individual changes x and y are one in species just in case they have the same type of path. They are one in number just in case, in addition, they have the numerically same subject and occur at the same time. Aristotle does not supply any general account of how the species of an activity is determined, but it is clear at least that activities x and y are one in number only if they are simultaneous and belong to the same species and have the numerically same subject.

I believe that Aristotle counts mental events alone as activities, the only examples he mentions. If so,[21] then the problem about how to determine the

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[20] *Phys.* 206a29–33, 207b14–15, 208a20–1, 218b23, 32–3, 219a6–8, 13–14, 23–5, 32–3, b9–10.

[21] If not so, it is nevertheless clear that Aristotle regards thought, perception, and pleasure as activities, so it is still worthwhile to examine what Aristotle has to say about these cases.

I take it for granted that Aristotle counts pleasure as an activity (*pace* Bostock 2000: 154–5; Broadie and Rowe 2002: 435—Broadie's view was different in 1991: 335–6, 340). While *NE* 10.4 does not say explicitly that pleasure is an activity as opposed to a change, neither does it explicitly say that seeing is an activity. Nevertheless, we know that that is Aristotle's view (*Meta.* 1048b23, 33–5). *NE* 10.4 explains pleasure by comparing it to seeing, and they share all the features which Aristotle appeals to in order to distinguish them from change: both are complete and wholes (1174a14–19, b5–7, 14), there is coming to be of neither (1174b12–14), and although it is only said explicitly of pleasure that it can exist not in time (1174b7–9), the justification for this claim about pleasure is that it is a whole—as, of course, is seeing. Similarly, only pleasure is explicitly said not to be a change or coming to be (1174b10) but the justification for the claim is that only divisibles which are not wholes are changes (1174b10–12), and it is obvious that the same point is meant to apply to seeing. Further, while Book 7 affirmed that pleasure is a kind of *energeia*, Book 10 says that a pleasure and the activity on which it supervenes are close in nature (1175b32), and are so alike that it is a difficult issue to species of activities applies to at least two types of case: (a) thought and perception and (b) pleasure, pain, anger, and so on, which are somehow derivative from or dependent on thought or perception. In the case of pleasure, Aristotle thinks that its species will be determined by the species of the activity on which it supervenes (*NE* 1153a6–7, 20–3, 1173b28–31, 1175b24–36; contrast *EE* 1221b36–7). So to determine how the species of pleasure is fixed we need to determine how the species of perception and thought are fixed.

To begin with the case of perception, a number of distinctions can be drawn between different kinds of, or different ways of describing, perception.[22] Aristotle recognizes a variety of kinds of object that one can be said to perceive.

(i) Proper objects of perception. These are perceived in the strict sense. They are the direct objects of the five senses: colours for sight, sounds for hearing, and so on.

(ii) Accidental objects of perception: (1) the subject of the proper object of perception (for example, Socrates when I see his white colour); (2) a feature which is not a proper object of perception but is a feature of the subject of the proper object of perception (for example, the quality of being musical when I see the whiteness of the musical Socrates); (3) the composite of a feature other than the proper object of perception with the subject of the sensible quality (for example, musical Socrates when I see his whiteness).[23]

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determine whether they are the same entity or different entities (*NE* 1175b31–3). How could they be so difficult to distinguish if one were and the other were not an activity?

Broadie's only argument for denying that pleasure is an activity appears to be that if pleasure is an activity along with the perception or thought on which it supervenes, 'there would be a question whether one takes pleasure in it too, and a possible infinite regress' (Broadie and Rowe 2000: 70). This is no more convincing than an argument that perceiving that one perceives cannot be an activity along with the perceived perception as then there would be a question whether one perceives the higher-order perception too, and a possible infinite regress. *NE* 9.7 argues that as one can enjoy living (1170a18–20, 26, b13–15), so one can enjoy perceiving that one is alive, that is, *one can enjoy perceiving that one perceives and thinks* (1170a29–b5). If pleasure supervenes on an activity, the fact reported by the italicized phrase requires the higher-order perception to count as an activity. Further, since he considers pleasure a good, Aristotle's statement that it is pleasant to perceive that one possesses the good (1170b2–3) commits him to the claim that it is pleasant to perceive that one is enjoying something—*whether or not* pleasure is an activity. But there is no absurdity in supposing that a person might be pleased at the thought that he is enjoying life, in taking pleasure in one's pleasure.

According to Bostock (2000: 155), although Aristotle 'says that pleasure is *like* activities... it seems rash to infer that it *is* an activity.... Obviously, we cannot infer from the fact that pleasure is *like* a point... that pleasure *is* a point'. But (i) Bostock misrepresents what Aristotle says. He does not say that pleasure is 'like activities', he says it is like seeing (1174a16–17). And, of course, (ii) that comparison is not meant to suggest that pleasure is seeing.

[22] *De Anima* II.6. I leave aside 'the transparent' and light as objects of perception (*De An.* II.7).

[23] See *Top.* 110b37–111a6.

(iii) Common objects of perception: sensible objects perceivable by more than one sense and/or by the common sense.[24] Examples are change, rest, unity, time.

(iv) *That one perceives* or *that one is walking* can also be perceived by the common sense (*De An.* 3.2).

Again, in *Sen.* chapter 6 Aristotle contrasts external and internal objects of perception, which appears to be a distinction between (for example) the redness of the object and an internal image of red (446b21–5):

> In perceiving the object which first set up the motion—for example, a bell, or frankincense, or fire—all perceive an object numerically one and the same; while in the special object (τοῦ δὲ δὴ ἰδιοῦ) they perceive an object numerically different for each, though specifically the same for all; and this explains how many at the same time see, smell, or hear the same object (cf. 446b15–17).

Another distinction in reports of perception is that, according to Aristotle, *I am perceiving* X may be true (i) only if the whole of X is perceived or (ii) if *part* of X is perceived (*Parva Nat.* 448b6–7).

Since he says so little about activities, it is not clear whether Aristotle regards all of these different kinds of perception as activities, but we should bear them in mind as we examine some of the problems in Aristotle's views.

There is a lack of clarity in Aristotle's account of accidental objects of perception. Suppose I see the colour white which belongs to the son of Diares. According to Aristotle, white is the proper object of perception and the son of Diares is the accidental object of perception. But does Aristotle think that in order to count as an accidental object of perception the perceiver must be *aware that* what he sees is the son of Diares? I believe that all we can say is that Aristotle's position is not clear. He does at one point speak of accidentally perceiving x which attaches to the proper object of perception y when the subject is aware of both x and y (*De An.* 425a21–4). But his explanation of accidental perception does not require it.[25] The issue, as far as I can tell, has no effect on the questions I discuss here.[26]

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[24] Depending on how we understand Aristotle's view on common sense, an issue I need not address. See Graeser (1978: 69).

[25] Aristotle says that one accidentally perceives y when one perceives that the proper object of sense x and y 'belongs to' (συμβέβηκε) x, where 'belongs to' is used in such a way that the son of Diares or sweetness can 'belong to' white (*De An.* 418a21–3, 425a24–7). This explanation of accidental perception does not require the subject to be aware of y or think that it belongs to x, but it does not follow that Aristotle consciously intended to exclude such a requirement.

[26] I will not address the question of whether Aristotle thinks one can be unaware of what one enjoys about what one perceives or thinks.

3. Species of perception and thought

De Anima 415a16–22 is clear on the point that a mental event of perception or thought must be defined in terms of its proper object. Although Aristotle is thinking in very general terms about defining perception and thought, he is committed to his claim applying at a lower level to specific types of perception and thought. For, as he explains (418a24–5), each sense is defined in terms of the actual perception for which it is a potentiality, and the actual perception will be defined in terms of its proper object. It is easy to see why Aristotle should regard the species of a perception as determined by the species of its object given his explanation of perception and thought in terms of the perceptive soul and the intellect somehow receiving, respectively, perceptible and intelligible forms.[27] The activity of perceiving red, for example, consists, in part at any rate, in the 'action' of the form red on the perceptive soul which somehow receives it.

That the species of the activity of perception is fixed by the species of its proper object is also indicated by *De An.* 418a20–5, 424a17–24, and 425a24–7 which say that the nature of a sense is determined in relation to its proper objects, and an accidental object of perception such as Socrates or the son of Cleon does not, *as such*, affect the sense. It is only the proper object of a sense that is, properly speaking, perceived. If so, the accidental object of perception cannot play any role in determining what kind of perception occurs, any more than an accident of a substance can be part of the answer to the question of what kind of substance that substance is.

Given Aristotle's analogous explanation of thought it is clear that in a similar way the thought of sphericity (e.g.) consists in the form of sphericity acting in some non-material way on the intellect which receives it. Hence, where we have specifically different intelligible forms we have specifically different thoughts, and when we have specifically different perceptible forms we have specifically different perceptions, specifically different activities.

To enjoy something, on Aristotle's account, one must first have a thought or perception of some item X which will be the content of the thought or perception (*NE* 1174b14–1175a3). To enjoy X will be to enjoy perceiving or thinking of X. The little information Aristotle gives us about species of pleasure is contained in his discussion of pleasure in *NE* 10.1–5.[28] Aristotle asserts that certain activities differ in species, and gives some indications on how we are to judge *that* two activities differ in species.

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[27] See, e.g., *De An.* 418a3–6, 422b10–14, 429a13–18, 28–9, b30–1, 432a2–3. On species of objects of perception see 422b10–14, 23–7, 426b9–12; *De Sensu* 6.

[28] See *NE* 1153a6–7. Although Aristotle's statements that pleasures differ in species are at first tentative (1173b20–31, 1174a10–11), 10.5 leaves no doubt about his position.

Given the rudimentary criteria of identity for activities suggested previously it follows that pleasure is a different event than the event on which it supervenes. This is required anyway by Aristotle's assertion that it would be 'strange' to identify the two (*EN* 1175b34–5). So I understand Aristotle in *NE* 10 to construe pleasure as distinct from the activity enjoyed. In this respect I believe it differs from the account in *NE* 7.

The information given there can be summarized in the following statements:

A. Activities are specifically different.

B. Specifically different activities are completed by specifically different pleasures (1175a22–b1).

C. Activities of thought differ, specifically or generically, from activities of perception (1175a26–7).

D. Activities of perception differ specifically among themselves, and activities of thought differ specifically among themselves (1175a27–8, 32–3).[29]

E. If pleasure from an activity of kind X can hinder an activity of kind Y, then X and Y are (at least) specifically different (1175b1–24; cf. 1153a20–2).

F. If the same kind of pleasure makes activities X and Y more intense or precise or enduring, X and Y are (at least) the same in genus (1175a30–b1, 13–15; cf. 1153a22–3).

4. Species of perception and pleasure: *De Anima* and the *Nicomachean Ethics*

An object of perception is describable in different ways, referring to different aspects of the object under which it may be perceived. Suppose I see the white colour that happens to belong to Smith. It is clear on the *De Anima* account that we have an activity belonging to the species *seeing white*, not an activity belonging to the species *seeing Smith*. But seeing *Smith* can certainly result in pain which hinders other activities—being scared of Smith my enjoyment of the vision of the white colour is destroyed. And equally, if I am a friend of Smith then the pleasure of seeing Smith (*NE* 1171a35–b1)—which cannot be identified with enjoyment in seeing the colour white—might interfere with another activity. That suggests, with a strict reading of (E), that *seeing Smith* and/or *seeing a friend* is a species of perception.[30] Furthermore, I can enjoy seeing Smith without enjoying seeing the white colour attached to him. How then can seeing

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[29] The second point is not as explicit as the first, but presumably Aristotle thinks his example of geometrical thought differs in species from, say, thought about biology.

[30] I assume that if x and y differ in species, each belongs to a species. When they are individuals, x and y differ in species when the species to which x belong is different from the species to which y belongs. So it could not be that *seeing Smith*, as such, differs in species from other perceptions but does not as such belong to a species. Also, none of the kinds of pleasure mentioned by Aristotle in *NE* 10 are described in terms of a proper object of perception. So it could not be that he assumes that any proper description of the species of a perception on which a pleasure supervenes must be in terms of its proper object, and that therefore *seeing Smith* does not properly pick out a species of perception.

Smith not be a kind of activity if it is *only qua* seeing *Smith* or *seeing a friend* that the perception is enjoyed? A strict reading of (B) works both ways. If the pleasure of seeing Smith differs specifically from the pleasure of seeing white, then the activity of seeing Smith should also differ in species from the activity of seeing white.

So, to oversimplify,[31] there is an apparent conflict between *De Anima* and the *Nicomachean Ethics* on the question of how the species of perceptions are determined. On the *De Anima* account, *seeing white* is the species of perception that occurs in the present case, and *seeing Smith* or *seeing a friend* are merely accidental descriptions of the same event and cannot be species of perception. The *Nicomachean Ethics* account implies that *seeing Smith* and *seeing a friend* are species of perception.

The conflict cannot be dissolved by supposing that *seeing white* and *seeing Smith* might both be essential to one activity. *De Anima* simply rules out *seeing Smith* as a species of perception. Apart from this, it is hard to see how both descriptions could describe the species of one activity. Neither type of activity can be a genus or species of the other since either could occur without the other. But the idea that two coordinate species of activity could both be essential to one activity does not sit well with Aristotle's general views on the relation of coordinate species to their instances.

The difficulty arises from the fact that, whereas on the *De Anima*'s criterion the specific identity for a perception is fixed by the species of the proper object of the perception, the *Nicomachean Ethics* requires the possibility of enjoying accidental objects of perception, and then the species of the pleasure is determined by the accidental object rather than the proper object of the perception. If I *enjoy seeing my friend*, (B) implies that the species of pleasure is derivative on a *similar* species of perception, and that can only be *seeing a friend* and not, as *De Anima* required, *seeing white* (for example). Likewise, if, as

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[31] For at times the *Nicomachean Ethics* also suggests the '*De Anima* account'. See, for example, *NE* 1153a2–7 where it is the taste qualities of bitterness and sharpness which evidently determine the nature of the perceptions of them; and it is because of the nature of the qualities that the taste of them and/or the objects qualified by them is not pleasant.

Dorothea Frede argues that Aristotle is only interested in intentional objects of enjoyment (2006: 258) on the grounds that the measure doctrine 'he demands for pleasure and pain does not just depend on the sheer quantity, i.e. whether there is too much or too little. It also concerns the motive, the opportunity, and all other qualifications of an action that he carefully specifies: the persons involved, the object, the occasion, and the means employed to achieve a certain end.' As we will see later, the doctrine of the mean is indeed important for the issue of species of pleasure. But her point, if that is what she intended, does not establish that what is enjoyed by a subject must be specified in terms of the various factors referred to in Aristotle's doctrine of the mean. Even if the species of the pleasure depends on when, for what reason, for how long, etc., Smith enjoys the wine he is drinking, it does not follow that Smith is aware of those factors, or, even if he is aware of them, that he understands that the kind of pleasure he has depends on them. So the assumption that the species of the pleasure depends on those factors does not imply that Smith enjoys his wine *qua* for this length of time, with these people, etc.

Aristotle says (*NE* 1175b30–3), the pleasure and the activity on which it supervenes are so alike that it is debatable whether they are the same or different, and if it is only *qua seeing a friend* that I enjoy the perception, how could the kind of perception going on not be *seeing a friend*? So *De Anima* and the *Nicomachean Ethics* are committed to inconsistent positions on the question of species of perception.

Since Aristotle thinks that the species of a pleasure is derivative on the species of the perception on which it supervenes, the same unclarity will affect the question of species of pleasure. On the *De Anima* account of species of perception, the only perceptible things which a person could enjoy would be the proper objects of perception. But the variety of enjoyed objects of perception[32] mentioned by Aristotle in the *Nicomachean Ethics* and elsewhere shows that he cannot consistently restrict what we enjoy in this way.

While slightly inaccurate, for convenience I will speak of these different accounts as, respectively, the *De Anima* account of species of perception and the *Nicomachean Ethics* account. The former ties down the species of perception and pleasure to proper objects of perception. The latter includes these cases but also allows accidental objects of perception to determine species of perception and pleasure.

5. How finely are species of pleasure to be distinguished?

It appears that (E), that is,

> (E) If pleasure from an activity of kind X can hinder an activity of kind Y, then X and Y are (at least) specifically different,

implies that just about any difference in an object of thought or perception yields a specifically different activity of thought or perception. For the pleasure from the contemplation or perception of just about any distinct object of thought or perception *can* hinder the thought or perception of any other object.

But it is not obvious that Aristotle intends to apply (E) in this way to yield such fine-grained distinctions among activities and their supervening pleasures. It may also be a mistake to appeal to

> (B) Specifically different activities are completed by specifically different pleasures

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[32] Examples of things enjoyed include: hearing marvellous tales (*NE* 1117b32–5), hearing the flute (*NE* 1175b1–6), seeing a beautiful statue or horse or man (*Rhet.* 1340a23, *EE* 1230b31–4), seeing a stag or a wild goat (*NE* 1118a22–3), perceiving oneself (1170b8–10), hearing the rhythm of music (*Pol.* 1340b16–19, 1341a14) or speech (*Poetics* 1449b25–31).

for the conclusion that the members of any pair of specifically different thoughts or perceptions are completed by specifically different pleasures. Perhaps Aristotle holds that, for example, the pleasure of geometrical thinking is specifically alike whatever the theorem contemplated. In itself it is not very plausible to suggest that the pleasure of thinking $98+57=155$ specifically differs from the pleasure of thinking that $99+57=156$. Likewise for the contemplation of similar geometrical theorems. And (F) in conjunction with Aristotle's statement (*NE* 1153a22–3) that the pleasure of contemplation makes us want to contemplate all the more, may indicate that all pleasures of geometrical thinking are specifically alike. This is supported by 10.5, 1175a29–35, where Aristotle says that a pleasure enhances the activity of which it is the 'proper' pleasure, and speaks as if the pleasure of doing geometry will be the same whatever the geometrical issue involved. Pleasure in contemplating one geometrical theorem obviously need not result in a lack of interest in other geometrical truths but, on the contrary, might stimulate an interest and pleasure in contemplating others.

(B) is stated at the beginning and end of *NE* 10.5, 1175a21–b1, but the intervening discussion only uses it to distinguish the pleasures of geometrical thinking, hearing music, and building. Likewise in the ensuing passage (1175b1–24), (E) and (F) are used to distinguish the pleasures of playing the flute, conducting arguments, eating sweets, seeing a play, writing, and doing sums. So, as Aristotle himself applies (B), the activities with matching species of pleasure are not indivisible species but divisible genera such as geometrical thinking and hearing music (cf. *NE* 1177b19–21). Where such an interpretation would draw the line is not clear: hearing, hearing a symphony, hearing a flute... But it could not distinguish between species of perception, thought, and pleasure as finely as they are on the *De Anima* account.

I will call this interpretation of (A)-(E)'s implications for species of pleasure the *coarse* interpretation. The alternative *strict* interpretation ties the species of pleasure to the lowest (or at least lower) species of objects of thought or perception on which pleasure supervenes. So on the coarse interpretation, perhaps, the pleasure taken in geometrical thinking is the same no matter what the theorem contemplated. On the strict interpretation, since thinking of one geometrical theorem differs in species from thinking a different theorem (*Phys.* 256b27–257a2), it follows that the pleasure taken in contemplating the first also differs in species from the pleasure taken in contemplating the second. Similarly in other cases, species will be drawn more finely, though, as with the coarse interpretation, there will be vagueness as to where exactly the lowest species are to be fixed.

6. The contradictions between pleasure and the characteristics of activities

Besides the evidence from *NE* 10 just cited, one could argue for the coarse interpretation of (A)–(E) on the grounds that, as opposed to the strict interpretation, it might save Aristotle from difficulties arising from his classification of pleasure as an activity—difficulties that seem unavoidable on a strict interpretation. Consider the pleasure of hearing the symphony. On the coarse interpretation, perhaps, the pleasure taken in hearing the symphony is specifically the same throughout the time that the symphony is listened to and enjoyed.[33] The strict interpretation, on the other hand, entails that when one enjoys hearing a symphony the pleasure can be divided into other species of pleasure since specifically different perceptions will occur during the hearing of the entire symphony. It does not matter whether objects perceived are understood to be individual notes or passages of music, either way the pleasure of hearing the symphony will not be specifically indivisible, contrary to (6). As explained above, the *De Anima* and the *Nicomachean Ethics* accounts of species of perception are both committed to a strict interpretation.

Avoidance of a division of the pleasure of hearing the symphony into specifically different parts appears to be essential to the *Nicomachean Ethics*' account of pleasure since, once such a division is admitted, a raft of other problems follows.[34] If the pleasure of hearing the symphony is divisible into specifically different parts, then, assuming that one pleasure cannot belong to different species, distinct temporal parts of the pleasure of hearing the symphony exemplify specifically different types of pleasure, contrary to (4)'s claim that activities are not temporally divisible.

Further, if the pleasure of hearing the symphony is divisible into successive, specifically different temporal parts, it cannot be that all of the pleasure exists as soon as it exists since all of it exists only after all of the successive parts are 'traversed', contrary to (11).

And, contrary to (12), it cannot be that the species of the pleasure is fixed as soon as the pleasure exists. For the species of the pleasure of hearing the symphony is composed of the various species of the successive temporal parts of the pleasure. So what *kind* of pleasure occurs differs depending on where the performers stop playing. And since the numerical identity of an activity depends on its species, if the species of pleasure that would have occurred if the symphony had been completed differs from the species of the pleasure that actually occurs when the symphony is stopped before being completed, then the numerical identity of the pleasure that actually occurs is not fixed as soon as it exists. This contradicts (13).

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[33] Such an interpretation seems to be implied by Broadie's explanation of the completeness of seeing as set out in *NE* 10.4. Even if a show I am watching is incomplete because it is interrupted, she says, my perception counts, 'fully, as seeing' (Broadie and Rowe 2002: 434). This works only if all cases of seeing are *specifically* (and not merely generically) the same, and are not further distinguished in species by their specifically different objects. Otherwise there is no contrast with change: if a walk from x to y is interrupted, it still counts, fully, as walking.

[34] The suggestion that the following problems could be avoided by construing the pleasure in hearing the symphony as a series of activities will be considered below in section 12.

Nor is it clear why a pleasure could not be fast or slow, contrary to (15). The symphony can be played at different speeds, so the hearing of the symphony can take up more or less time. Since the pleasure of hearing the symphony occupies the same time as the hearing of the symphony (*NE* 1175b30–2), it can take more or less time to get from the start of the pleasure to the end. A change is fast or slow depending on how much time it takes to get from the starting point to the end point of the change. While pleasure does not have starting and end points of the sort that a change does (a quality, quantity, or place), that seems insufficient to deny that a pleasure can be fast or slow depending on the time it takes to traverse its specifically different stages. There seems to be no reason why the start and end of the pleasure would have to be qualities, quantities, or places in order for quickness and slowness to apply. A game of baseball is not a change with such starting and end points either but it can still be played quickly or slowly.

Again, if the pleasure of hearing the symphony is constituted from specifically different temporal parts, it is impossible for the pleasure to be squeezed into, and thus exist, at one and only one moment, contrary to (17).

Nor, contrary to (20), is there any reason to deny that pleasure comes to be. Just as a change and a day come to be in virtue of their distinct temporal stages existing one after another, so, on the strict interpretation, the pleasure of hearing the symphony comes to be in virtue of its distinct temporal stages existing one after another.

Versions of the coarse interpretation that make the pleasure of hearing the symphony specifically the same throughout its existence can deny that specifically different pleasures correspond to what, according to *De Anima*, would be specifically different perceptions that occur during the experience of the symphony. If there is only one kind of pleasure persisting throughout the performance, then (6) will not be violated by dividing the species of the activity into other species of perception. Nor, therefore, can one argue from specific differences in the type of pleasure to the claim that different temporal phases of the entire pleasure must exemplify these different types of pleasure. So (4) and (11) will not be violated: there will be no need to deny the temporal indivisibility of the pleasure. (Recall that temporally divisible entities must exist for periods of time.) Nor will there be any basis for denying the claim of (12) that the species of the pleasure is fixed as soon as it exists; which means that the strict interpretation's difficulty with (13) will be avoided as well: the numerical identity of the activity may depend on the species of the activity, but since the latter is fixed as soon as the activity exists, we cannot argue that since the species of the activity is not fixed as soon as it exists, neither is its numerical identity fixed as soon as it exists.

The strict interpretation may not give the pleasure in hearing the symphony a path of the sort that attaches to changes, but it seems to give it something similar: a specifically differentiated 'distance' such that the pleasure begins at one end and finishes at another. The coarse interpretation, by contrast, gives the pleasure no such distance to travel, so an activity has no analogue to the path of a change that could lead to the enjoyment of the symphony consisting in some distance being traversed more or less quickly. So (15) is safe.

Nor, since it allows for the temporal indivisibility of the activity, does the coarse interpretation provide any basis for denying that the pleasure could exist for one and only one moment (17), or for claiming that the pleasure 'comes to be' (20).

So the coarse interpretation of species of pleasure has a large advantage: it makes what Aristotle says about the specific case of pleasure fit his general claims about activities. And this is at least part of the reason why some interpreters have adopted it, or at least proposed interpretations which are committed to it.[35]

7. Problems with the coarse interpretation

Nevertheless, the coarse interpretation also faces serious objections. Obviously, it could not be correct if we assumed the *De Anima* account of species of perception, the only account of perception Aristotle ever provides, since that will make different types of sound match different species of hearing the different sounds. And if hearing C sharp differs in species from hearing A flat, then given that

(B) Specifically different activities are completed by specifically different pleasures,

the pleasure of hearing C sharp differs in species from the pleasure of hearing A flat. Furthermore, we have seen that with (*inter alia*) its example of enjoying seeing a friend (*NE* 1171a35–b1) the *Nicomachean Ethics* is committed to drawing finer distinctions in kinds of perception and pleasure than the *De Anima* account. This is confirmed in *NE* 10.5 itself as it assumes that pleasure in hearing *the flute* is a specific kind of pleasure (1175b1–6: ἡ κατὰ τὴν αὐλητικὴν ἡδονήν), and there is little plausibility in supposing that Aristotle could mean that there is no specific difference between this pleasure and pleasure in hearing a lyre. Certainly, as explained previously, Aristotle's use of

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[35] Without drawing attention to the question of species of activity, Penner (1970: 444–50) apparently commits himself to this sort of view. Likewise his contrast between the identity conditions for pleasure and the identity conditions for change (411–22) suggests that the lowest species to which the object of pleasure belongs plays no role in determining the species of the pleasure. A similar proposal is made by Gosling and Taylor (1982: 313–14) who say that, for *NE* 10, 'the unimpeded exercise of some capacity' specifies both enjoyment and its object. Such a view will, as intended, avoid the difficulties with Aristotle's classification of pleasure as an activity only if it implies the coarse interpretation of species of pleasure. The implication seems to be made when they say: 'Aristotle's thought may perhaps be that when someone enjoys e.g. playing a piece of music, what he really enjoys is exercising his musical capacity, the playing of the particular piece being merely incidental to the enjoyment' (313).

(E) If pleasure from an activity of kind X can hinder an activity of kind Y, then X and Y are (at least) specifically different

implies that hearing the flute is different in species from hearing other musical instruments since someone's enjoyment in hearing a lyre could hinder their hearing another instrument. So it seems that enjoying hearing *is* divisible into lower species of pleasure. *NE* 10.5's example of enjoying tasting sweets can be used to make the same point (1175b11–13, 1176a10–14).

The unacceptability of the coarse interpretation also seems to be implied by the main use which the *Nicomachean Ethics* makes of the claim that pleasures differ in species. As noted before, Aristotle is primarily concerned to show that pleasure is a good, and an important part of his discussion of pleasure deals with arguments to the contrary which refer to base or harmful pleasures. Aristotle replies that while base pleasures exist,[36] other kinds of pleasure also exist, viz. good pleasures, and the existence of the base pleasures does not show that good pleasures are not valuable. Since the base pleasure that the self-indulgent enjoy in perceiving some physical object through the sense of touch differs in species from the virtuous pleasure that the temperate enjoy in perceiving a similar physical object, the perceptions on which the pleasures supervene must (given (B)) also differ in species. Hence, perception through the sense of touch must be divisible into specifically different types.

True, at times, even in *NE* 10.5, Aristotle speaks as though the difference in value between pleasures might be drawn in a broad generic way that would fit a coarse interpretation (*NE* 1175b36–1176a3): 'As activities are different, then, so are the corresponding pleasures. Now sight is superior to touch in purity, and hearing and smell to taste; the pleasures, therefore, are similarly superior, and those of thought superior to these.' This might suggest that identification of the species of a pleasure in order to identify it as good or bad requires no more than appeal to the general capacity of sense or thought involved. Then we would have fully identified the species of a pleasure when we note, say, that it is a pleasure of touch, and therefore bad; or a pleasure of thought, and therefore good.

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[36] I set aside Aristotle's occasional suggestions that base pleasures are only apparent pleasures. *NE* 10.5's drawing of specific differences between base and virtuous pleasures presupposes that there are both base and neutral pleasures (1175b24–8). In Book 10, at any rate, the distinction between species of pleasure is not used, as Gosling and Taylor (1982: 288) suggest, 'to bring in the point that some apparent pleasures are not really such'. Rather, as a response to the arguments against the value of pleasure which appeal to base pleasures, the proposal that base pleasures are not real pleasures (*NE* 1173b20–5) is an *alternative* to the reply (*NE* 1173b28–31)—Aristotle's reply—which divides pleasures into distinct species.

The same is suggested in *NE* 7 (1153a27–35) where, it appears, not merely excessive bodily pleasures but all of them are said not to be good. The temperate man, Aristotle says, does not enjoy them in moderation, he avoids them altogether and enjoys *different* pleasures (1153a34–5). Merely identifying a pleasure as a pleasure of taste or touch appears to establish that it is bad or at least not good.

But Aristotle cannot consistently maintain this puritanical view. As his doctrine of the mean shows, he does not believe that vicious and virtuous men differ so drastically that their pleasures are associated with mutually exclusive senses and faculties, with the virtuous enjoying the pleasures of thought, sight, hearing, and smell, and the vicious enjoying the pleasures of touch and taste. Rather, he believes that a virtue and its associated vices all relate to *the same sphere* of actions, emotions, and pleasures. So the vicious and the virtuous will enjoy pleasures belonging to the same genus. *NE* VII.14, 1154a8–21 emphasizes that the temperate man pursues the same bodily pleasures of touch and taste as the self-indulgent man (cf. 1117b23–7, 1118a23–6; *EE* 1227b5–10, 1231a26–b4), but instead of pursuing excessively bodily pleasures he pursues them as he ought, when he ought, and so forth. So in the case of temperance Aristotle believes that the virtuous man, like the self-indulgent man, will enjoy pleasures of taste and touch (cf. *EE* 1245a37–8); but he will differ from the self-indulgent man in hitting the intermediate in his enjoyment rather than the excess characteristic of self-indulgence.

Hence, the virtuous man *acts temperately* and enjoys doing so (i.e. fundamentally, enjoys perceiving himself doing so) while the self-indulgent man *acts self-indulgently* and enjoys doing so. At *NE* 10.3, 1173b28–31, where Book 10 first broaches the proposal that pleasures differ in species, Aristotle says:

> Or do pleasures differ in species? For the pleasures derived from fine things are different in species from the pleasures derived from shameful things, and one cannot have the pleasure of the just man without being just, nor the pleasure of the musical man without being musical, and similarly in other cases.

Though open to a different reading,[37] this suggests that the *species* of action on which the pleasure of the temperate man supervenes is *acting temperately*, and that it is *as such* that the temperate man will enjoy what he does. Since *acting self-indulgently* is a different *species* of action, the pleasure supervening on (the perception of) it will differ in species from that of the temperate man when he acts temperately. Understanding the temperate and self-indulgent men's actions as both exercises of the sense of taste (say), the coarse interpretation provides no means of distinguishing *acting temperately* and *acting self-indulgently* as different species of action, and so likewise provides no means of explaining a specific difference between the perception of the one and the perception of the other. Nor, therefore, does it provide an explanation of the specific difference between the pleasures in doing one and in doing the other.

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[37] On its own the passage does not exclude the possibility that Aristotle understands the species of action on which the pleasure supervenes as something to be described in value-neutral terms.

Distinguishing species of action on the basis of their value seems to be just what Aristotle does in *NE* II. When discussing the acquisition of virtue of character he says it is the same actions by which a virtue or vice is both acquired and actualized after its acquisition (1104a27–b3, 1105a13–19, 1114b27–8; *EE* 1220a31–4). If 'same action' does not mean 'same kind of action', this claim has no content. So it must be the same species of action that is performed both before and after one acquires a virtue.

NE 5.8 draws a distinction between *doing what is just* (τὰ δίκαια πράττειν) and *acting justly* (δικαιοπράγειν) with corresponding distinctions for other virtues. So one *does what is temperate* when the action one performs possesses the attribute of temperance, and *acts temperately* if the action is also voluntary. The latter may be a virtuous action even if it is not chosen (*NE* 1117a20–2).[38] If it is the same kind of action that one performs both before and after acquiring a virtue, Aristotle must mean that both before and after acquiring the virtue of temperance, the virtuous man will *do what is temperate* where this is evidently understood as being a different species of action than *doing what is self-indulgent.* If the coarse interpretation cannot account for such a distinction it will not be able to explain the specific differences between the perceptions of those actions and their supervening pleasures.

8. Value and species of activity and pleasure

When Aristotle distinguishes the value of pleasures on the basis of the difference in value of the activities on which they supervene,[39] he is thinking of the goodness and baseness of the actions in question. He is not thinking, or not merely thinking, of the paths of the changes involved in accordance with *Phys.* 5.4's account of specific identity for change. Thus, it is not merely the fact that an action is a case of eating, for example, that matters for determining its species. That also depends on how it is done, when it is done, its purpose, and so on, in short all the factors from the doctrine of the mean which are relevant in a particular case to determining an action's moral quality. How the factors are realized in a particular case will be reported, in brief, as *acting temperately* or

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[38] Contrary to John Cooper's view that only chosen actions are virtuous (1996b: 264, 278). The passages he cites (*NE* 2.4, 1104b31–2; III.8, 1116b23–1117a9) specify conditions necessary for the possession of a virtue rather than for an action's being virtuous. A courageous action may be done voluntarily and for the sake of the fine without being chosen.

[39] *NE* 1175b24–1176a3, 1176a24–6; *Rhet.* 1338a1–9.

acting self-indulgently. So a case of eating pork that is excessive will differ in species from one that is moderate, as the first will be a self-indulgent action while the second will be a temperate action. Hence, pleasures taken in these actions will also differ in species, the pleasure taken by the self-indulgent man in the first being a self-indulgent pleasure, the pleasure taken by the temperate man in the second being a temperate and specifically different pleasure.[40]

One might try to fit this into *NE* 10.4's explanation of when pleasure occurs—or at least do so for cases of virtuous action since *NE* 10's explanation does not apply to vicious pleasures, or pleasure taken in bad or unworthy objects. Aristotle says (1174b14–1175a3) that when the subject of perception or thought is in its best condition, and the object of perception or thought is fine (καλός) or at its best, then when the subject thinks and/or perceives the object, pleasure will result. Aristotle says little about what it is for an object of awareness to be at its best, but *EE* 3.2.1230b34–1231a12 and *NE* 3.8 appear to mean that at least one way in which an object of hearing can be at its best is when it is harmonious. So the fineness of a sound will consist (at least in part or in some cases) in its harmony. For pleasure to occur when harmonious sound is produced the subject must also be at its best, and that requires a kind of sensitivity to harmony which non-human animals lack. Hence, animals, though hearing sound, will not perceive its harmony, its fineness, and so will not enjoy it (or at least they will not do so in virtue of its being harmonious).

In the case of human action, Aristotle must think that, in at least very many cases, part of its fineness consists in its virtuousness. This will be spelled out in terms of the doctrine of the mean. To count as a virtuous action, the relevant factors cited in the doctrine of the mean will have to be satisfied in the correct way. The perception or thought of a virtuous action will produce pleasure in a person only if they are such as to be sensitive to the virtue of the action, and such sensitivity requires knowledge relevant to the virtue in question.[41] Just as, when perceiving what is sweet, the healthy man will perceive its sweetness and enjoy it while the man in a fever will not, so, when observing a virtuous action, the good man will detect its fineness and enjoy the action while the vicious man will do neither (*NE* 1176a10–19; *Pol.* 1340a14–18). This pleasure in observing a virtuous action will, of course, apply—indeed especially so (*NE* 1169b28–1170a4)—when the virtuous man observes *his own* virtuous actions (1099a7–21).

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[40] Similarly, when Aristotle explains how virtuous friends enjoy one another's company, it is in observing actions *as* virtuous that they are enjoyed (*NE* 1156b15–17, 1157a1–2, b26–8, 1162a25–7, 1169b31–1170a4, 8–11).

[41] Contrary to a widespread misinterpretation of Aristotle, his acceptance of the existence of continence and incontinence shows that such sensitivity does not require actual possession of the virtue (see *EE* 1227b12–16). An incontinent person may know very well what is fine in the sphere of bodily pleasures, while consciousness of his own weakness reinforces his admiration and pleasure in a continent friend's actions. The cases of continence and incontinence also show that Julia Annas goes too far in saying that 'it is one's conception of the good life which determines what counts for one as being pleasant'; and that 'the pleasures of what I think wicked can offer me no real temptation until I cease to think of them as really being wicked' (1980: 288, 293). The incontinent agent enjoys pleasures he regards as morally wrong and which violate his conception of the good life (*EE* 1237a6–9). Annas recognizes the problem which akrasia creates for her claim but concludes that 'Aristotle's account of pleasure and its place in the good life cannot properly account for the incontinent man' (295). I would say rather that incontinence refutes her view that Aristotle thinks that pleasure is always dependent on one's conception of the good life. On the contrary, Aristotle plainly recognizes that appetite and *thumos* are sources of desires for pleasure that can operate independently of one's beliefs

9. The coarse interpretation responds

The idea that the value of a perceived object plays a role in determining the species of the perception of and the species of the pleasure taken in the perception was set out as an objection to the coarse interpretation's position on how to distinguish species of pleasure. However, it is not obvious that the coarse interpretation cannot deal with this issue.

Return to the example of enjoying hearing a symphony. Gosling and Taylor have suggested that it is important to distinguish two possible descriptions of the hearing: either qua *exercising the capacity to hear* or qua *hearing the symphony.* Under the description *hearing the symphony* the hearing may not be an activity but under the former description it is, and it might be claimed that it is on the hearing understood as *exercising the capacity to hear* that the pleasure of hearing supervenes (Gosling and Taylor 1982: 313–14).

Then something similar can be done for the exercise of a virtue. One might suggest, following Gosling and Taylor, that the virtuous man's walk from x to y can be considered under two descriptions: as a change of place from x to y or as an exercise of the virtue of (say) courage. It is under the second description—'exercise of courage'—that the virtuous man takes pleasure in what he observes, and hence the species of the virtuous man's pleasure is *enjoying observing the exercise of courage.* The vicious walk from x to y can also be considered under two descriptions: as a change of place from x to y or as an exercise of the vice of (say) cowardice. And it is under the second description—'exercise of cowardice'—that the vicious man takes pleasure in what he observes, and hence the species of the vicious man's pleasure is *enjoying observing the exercise of cowardice.* Hence, as Aristotle wants, the two pleasures differ in species.[42]

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about what is valuable. And even in the case of the temperate person, it is wrong to suggest, as Annas does, that it is a person's conception of the good that on its own determines what counts as pleasant for that person. Aristotle is well aware of differences in tastes among people (*NE* 1175a30–b24, 1176a10–15), and there is no justification for foisting on him the absurdity that the difference between people who enjoy beer and people who enjoy wine must be *based on* a difference in their beliefs in the value of drinking beer and drinking wine.

[42] Penner (1970: 420–1, 438–40, 449) offers a similar solution which distinguishes rather than identifies the exercise of the capacity and the walk.

10. A problem with the objection to the coarse interpretation

Not only can the coarse interpretation provide a reply to the objection that appealed to specific differences based on value, that objection itself becomes problematic when we realize that its appeal to value to draw specific differences is inconsistent with much of what Aristotle says on how such distinctions are determined.

The last argument against the coarse interpretation bases specific differences in the activities on which pleasures supervene on their *moral* characteristics. But this conflicts with what Aristotle says in other writings including, surprisingly, the *Nicomachean Ethics* itself. On either the proper object or the accidental object criterion of perception, the species of the object perceived determines the species of perception *independently* of any question of value, moral or otherwise. It is clear that in *De Anima*, for example, a temperate tasting of sweetness is specifically identical with a self-indulgent tasting of sweetness. Hence, if the species of a pleasure is determined by the species of the activity (in this case, the perception) on which it supervenes, then, contrary to *NE* 10.5, there will be no difference in species—and therefore no difference in value—between a temperate enjoyment in tasting sweetness and a self-indulgent enjoyment in tasting sweetness.

Similarly, on the *Physics'* account of identity for change, appealed to in *NE* 10's discussion of pleasure (*τὸ πόθεν ποῖ εἰδοποιόν, δι' ἀκριβείας μὲν οὖν περὶ κινήσεως ἐν ἄλλοις εἴρηται*, 10.4.1174a21–b5), the species of an action such as walking is determined by its path and its value is irrelevant. *NE* 10.4 does refine the *Physics'* account by saying that, in the case of locomotion, the mode of locomotion (walking, leaping, flying) is relevant to determining the species of the change (1174a29–31; cf. *PA* 639a30–b3). But that qualification *presupposes* that actions such as walking and leaping are indeed changes to which the *Physics'* criterion of specific identity for *κίνησις*, thus qualified, applies. There is no question of the moral value of an action such as walking playing any role in determining the species of the action.

So, according to the *Physics'* account, appealed to in *NE 10* itself, a virtuous walk from x to y is the same in species as a vicious walk from x to y. For example, in one battle a soldier bravely advances from x to y, while in a battle a year later with a different disposition of forces a soldier acts with cowardice in retreating from x to y. Hence, if the species of a perception is determined by the species of its object, the perception of a virtuous walk from x to y will be the same in species as the perception of a vicious walk from x to y. But if the perceptions do not differ in species, then, if the species of a pleasure is determined by the species of the perception on which it supervenes, it will also be true that Smith's virtuous pleasure in perceiving the virtuous walk from x to y will be the same in species as Jones's vicious pleasure in perceiving the vicious walk from x to y.

Hence, contrary to *NE* 10.5, Smith's virtuous pleasure will be the same in species as Jones's vicious pleasure. The point applies irrespective of whether they take pleasure in perceiving their own (*NE* 1170a29–30) or other people's actions.

This understanding of how the species of the activity on which pleasure supervenes is fixed (and hence of how the species of the supervening pleasure is fixed) even fits some claims in *NE* 10.5. When 10.5 says that pleasures differing in species differ in value, where the specific differences in the activities determine the specific differences in the supervening pleasures, the value of the activities on which the pleasures supervene does not seem to play any role in determining the species of the activity. Rather, the value of the activity is a *consequence* of the kind of activity it is. After asserting that activities different in species are completed by pleasures different in species (*NE* 10.5.1175a21–b24), Aristotle says that since the activities on which pleasures supervene differ in value, the pleasures will correspondingly differ in value (*NE* 1175b24–28; cf. 1153a6–7, 1173b28–9). So, in a particular case with activities 1 and 2:

1. We determine that 1 and 2 differ in species.
2. We conclude that, with regard to the supervening pleasures, pleasure 1 differs in species from pleasure 2.
3. The value of 1 determines that pleasure 1 has a matching value, and the value of 2 determines that pleasure 2 has a matching value.

What is not immediately clear is whether (i) the *value* of the activities supervened on plays any role in determining the species of the activities, or, instead, as just outlined, (ii) the species of the activity is determined *independently of* its value. In the latter case, there will be an intermediate step between (1) and (3) above where the value of an activity is determined by its kind.

The text of *NE* 10.5 suggests (ii), for every species of activity mentioned[43] is described independently of its value: geometrical thinking, building, listening to music, attending to arguments, playing the flute, eating sweets, watching a play, writing or doing sums, seeing, touching, hearing, smelling, tasting. And (as noted above) when (1175b24–1176a3) it is explained that the pleasures of good activities are good and the pleasures of bad activities are bad, the point is illustrated by saying that since sight, hearing, and smell are better than touch and taste, the pleasures of the former are likewise better than the pleasures of the latter. Aristotle appears to think that we can determine that activities belong to the species *seeing, hearing,* and so on, without assessing their value since it is *after* determining their species as *seeing, hearing,* and so on, that their value is determined.

If so, he cannot get out of the present difficulty by saying that the species of the activity on which a good or bad pleasure supervenes is determined in part by the activity's value; that therefore a virtuous seeing of a colour differs in species from a vicious seeing of the same colour; and that therefore the supervening pleasures also differ in species.

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[43] Aristotle evidently intends the descriptions to specify species of activity.

So, Aristotle's appeal to species of pleasure in the *Nicomachean Ethics* not only causes problems in reconciling his statements with the characteristics that are supposed to hold for activities. Another fundamental problem is that his primary reason for introducing the idea of species of pleasure is in order to distinguish worthwhile pleasures from shameful pleasures. But the only criteria he bothers to set out to distinguish changes and perceptions—the entities whose specific differences determine the species of pleasures—cannot yield the desired specific differences between good and bad pleasures.

11. A defence of the objection to the coarse interpretation

In reply to the argument in section 10, it could be said that the evidence cited in section 8 shows that when the *Nicomachean Ethics* says that the species of good and bad pleasures differ because the species of the activities on which they supervene differ in species, he is using a different notion of 'species of action' than that found in the *Physics*.

For the evidence cited there shows that it is, for example, *as* acting temperately or *as* acting justly that an action is enjoyed by the virtuous man. So a courageous man and a coward may follow the same path in walking from x to y; so both, by the *Physics'* criterion, may perform the same species of action. But when distinguishing species of pleasure in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle takes the fact that one of the walks from x to y is courageous while the other is cowardly to establish that they are, in the relevant sense, different in species.

The factors mentioned in the doctrine of the mean can be used to draw the relevant distinctions. So, apart from questions of voluntariness, the questions of how the action is done, whether the action is done with respect to the right objects or people, its purpose, and so forth will determine whether a change from x to y can be described as a courageous or cowardly action. Then, when those factors are of one kind the change is a courageous action, and when they are of another kind the change is a cowardly action, an action specifically different from the courageous action. Hence, when the virtuous man observes the courageous action his perception and the supervening pleasure are different in species from the perception and the supervening pleasure of the cowardly man when he observes his own cowardly behaviour.

It may well be that, by the *Physics'* criterion, the question of whether the walk from x to y is courageous or cowardly is an accidental feature of the change which does not affect its species. But we have already seen in section 4 with the example of enjoying seeing one's friend that the *Nicomachean Ethics* must allow what the *De Anima* counts as accidental features of objects of perception to determine species of perception—and thus determine the species of the supervening pleasure.

This is certainly a reasonable proposal. But it is not problem free. To begin with, as noted before, it conflicts with what is implied in *NE* 10.4 itself about how species of action are determined. There (*τὸ πόθεν ποῖ εἰδοποιόν, δι᾿ ἀκριβείας μὲν οὖν περὶ κινήσεως ἐν ἄλλοις εἴρηται*, 1174a21–b5), Aristotle refers explicitly to the *Physics'* account of specific identity for change as the account he takes for granted in *NE* 10.4 ; and this is the only explanation of action identity that Aristotle provides anywhere. Thus, the proposal appeals to a notion of action identity which Aristotle nowhere explains.

Further, if we adopt this approach we will, in fact, have to introduce a *third* notion of species of action to fit with what Aristotle says about the acquisition of virtue in *NE* 2. There he says that it is by performing the *same kind* of action that one both acquires a virtue of character and actualizes it once it is acquired. But, using the distinctions Aristotle draws in *NE* 5.8, while the novice may, perhaps reluctantly at first, *do what is just*, it is only after the virtue is fully acquired that the virtuous man can be said to justly do what is just, performing it for its own sake. Obviously, the virtuous man's action is finer than the novice's action, and the virtuous man will enjoy the just man's action more than the action of the novice. So, by the criterion of action identity which appeals to the doctrine of the mean, the novice's action of doing what is just cannot be the same in species as the virtuous man's action of doing what is just. But then, when he says that it is by performing 'the same kind' of action that one both acquires a virtue of character and actualizes it when fully virtuous, Aristotle is using a notion of 'same species of action' that differs from both the criterion based on the *Physics* and the criterion presupposed when distinguishing virtuous pleasures from shameful pleasures.

Further, some evidence suggests that Aristotle thinks that the factors alluded to in the doctrine of the mean affect how it can be described without affecting its species. In *NE* 5.8, 1135b25–1136a1, Aristotle discusses a case where one person harms another, having used the example of wounding shortly before (1135b15). In such cases, he says, it may be unclear whether what was done was just or unjust, even though *what happened* is perfectly clear (*οὐ γὰρ . . . περὶ τοῦ γενέσθαι ἀμφισβητοῦσιν . . . ἀλλ´ ὁμολογοῦντες περὶ τοῦ πράγματος*). So when one person wounds another but it is unclear whether he does so justly or unjustly, if *what was done* is the same either way, then the species of what happened must be the same whether it was just or unjust. This fits a *Physics*-style account of action identity since an action of wounding will be a kind of change in the body whose species will be fixed by the path of the change in the victim. And on the

Physics' account,[44] the agent's wounding is one in number and therefore specifically identical with the being wounded.

A similar picture is presented at *Rhet.* 1373b37–1374a17, a passage in which Aristotle mentions various cases where disagreement on how to describe an action is not disagreement on *what* the agent *has done* (πεπραχέναι). Thus, all might agree that a person struck another while disagreeing as to whether an 'outrage' was committed. Such further descriptions, Aristotle explains, depend on the particular circumstances of the case, including the states of mind of the agent and patient. Here again, in accordance with *Phys.* 5.4's account, *what* the agent *has done* and hence (apparently) the *species* of the action is the same whether or not it was an act of injustice.

So while an account of action identity based on the doctrine of the mean could help to justify Aristotle's position, he himself says nothing to explain such an account. Without it, he has no basis for saying that a perception of a virtuous action differs in species from a perception of a vicious action. And since that specific difference is the basis for his claim that the supervening pleasures—one good and one bad—differ in species, this last claim has no adequate justification in the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

12. The strict interpretation

Whatever the value of the objection to the coarse interpretation discussed in the previous four sections, it seems that the coarse interpretation cannot be Aristotle's final position. This will emerge in the following discussion which tries to understand how Aristotle might handle the example of taking pleasure in hearing a symphony.

Returning to that case, it might be suggested that *hearing the symphony* is at best a *genus* of activity. On the *De Anima* account, the species of a hearing experience is determined by its *proper* object. Then, given that activities X and Y can be numerically identical only if they are specifically identical, it follows that hearing the symphony is not a single activity but a series of numerically and specifically different activities each of which is homogeneous in the way required. The species of pleasure will then be distinguished in a similar way. If so, the conflicts set out in section 6 disappear.

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[44] *Phys.* 3.3. It will not help to appeal to a finer distinction drawn in *Phys.* 5.5. There Aristotle says that a change from health to illness can be considered as (i) *the change from health* or (ii) *the change to illness* and that (i) differs *in being* from (ii). If so, it would also be reasonable to think that Aristotle believes that *wounding someone* and *acting unjustly towards someone* differ in being even if they describe the same action. But even though (i) and (ii) differ in being, Aristotle describes them as 'one and the same change' (229a18). If so, on *Phys.* 5.4's criterion (227b20–30), (i) and (ii) are the same in species, and that is the question at issue.

But Aristotle's account of pleasure will also be incredible since, as it reduces the hearing of the symphony to a series of individual perceptions of individual notes, so it reduces the enjoyment of music to the enjoyment of individual notes. If, as Aristotle says, a perception and the pleasure which supervenes on it are so alike that it is a debatable issue as to whether they are the same or different, then if the 'whole' hearing of the symphony is reducible to a series of 'hearings' of individual notes, then the pleasure taken in hearing the symphony must likewise be a series of 'enjoyings' supervening on those individual perceptions.[45]

But it is an obvious fact that the enjoyment of a musical phrase usually depends on the sequence and structure of the sounds involved. And the enjoyment of the entire sequence of notes is plainly not reducible to a series of enjoyments of individual notes such as the enjoyment of C sharp, the enjoyment of A flat, and so on.

In any case, it is clear that Aristotle does not intend his account to be so restricted since his discussion of pleasure refers to the enjoyment of a song or melody or phrase (*μέλη*, 1175a13–14; cf. 1118a8, *Pol.* 1341a14, *Parva Nat.* 446a2–3).[46] But since he affirms that a musical phrase is a discrete series of sounds[47] there is no continuous event of hearing the musical phrase, nor, therefore, any continuous event of hearing or pleasure that persists throughout the playing of the musical phrase. Likewise, he contrasts the pleasure of hearing harmonious sounds with the pain of hearing sounds that are not in harmony (*EE* 1230b27–8, 1231a1; cf. *NE* 1117a7–8), and the question of harmony does not arise for notes taken in isolation. The same is true for Aristotle's examples of taking pleasure in the *rhythm* of music (*Pol.* 1340b16–19, 1341a14) or speech (*Poet.* 1449b25–31). It would similarly be absurd to try to reduce enjoyment in calculation (*λογίζεσθαι*, *NE* 1175b18) to a series of enjoyments in particular items involved in the calculation.

The example from the *Poetics* reflects the importance of this type of pleasure for that work's view of aesthetic pleasure and tragedy. Aristotle's account is based on a distinction between sensual pleasure in the perceptual aspects of a work of art, and the pleasure which is proper to the products of the mimetic arts. Thus, the pleasure which is proper to tragedy is a pleasure in learning or understanding, while the sensual pleasure associated with tragedy will be the enjoyment of the 'rhythmical and melodic "garnishings"'[48] of the work's language.

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[45] This sort of view was actually proposed by Mourelatos (1968: 515): '"The enjoyment of a complex is a complex of enjoyments," Aristotle might have said.'

[46] See *Pol.* 1276b6–9: 'In the same way, every association and composition is different if the form of the composition is different, as we call a scale of the same sounds different when it is played in the Dorian mode and when it is played in the Phrygian mode.'

[47] *Meta.* 1024a20–2 says that a musical scale (*ἁρμονία*) cannot be mutilated because it is not continuous. But *Parva Nat.* 446a2–3 does speak of a continuous *μέλος*.

Pleasure in melodies and rhythms is also important for Aristotle's belief that music can be used to form character. Different melodies and rhythms are imitative of different character traits and, Aristotle believes, appropriate rhythms and melodies can be an effective tool in the development of virtue. Thus, the virtuous man will enjoy only the appropriate kinds of melodies and rhythms (*Pol.* 8.5, 7; cf. *Rhet.* 1408b32–1409a1).

Given these differences, it is obvious that the defence of the coarse interpretation from section 8 on how to accommodate Aristotle's account of pleasure with his account of activities will not work. The pleasures of hearing, for example, require much finer discriminations than 'enjoyment in the exercise of the capacity to hear'.

The problem is not solved by denying that *NE* 10 is committed to the claim that the species of an activity is indivisible, and rejecting claims (6) and (12):[49]

6. The lowest species of a whole change is divisible into species of parts of the change, which species (of the parts) differ from each other and the species of the whole. *The lowest species to which an activity belongs is not divisible into different species belonging to parts of the activity.*

12. A change is incomplete in that the species of a change is not determined as long as it exists; for as long as a change exists, its species depends on what happens later. *The species of an activity is determined as soon as it exists and does not depend on what happens later.*

NE 10.4 and *Meta.* 9.6, together constituting a couple of pages, are the only passages in Aristotle's writings which directly address the issue of the characteristics of activities as opposed to changes. *NE* 10.4, the longer of the two passages, devotes most of its discussion to making the point that an activity differs from a change in being specifically indivisible. It makes this point very clearly, and we cannot hope to understand Aristotle's account of activities if we do not accept even his clearest statements on the issue.

The problems arising from the case of hearing the symphony seem even starker in the case of the perception of change. As noted above, Aristotle thinks that change is one of the common objects of perception (*De An.* 417a17–20). Suppose Smith sees Jones walking from S to E (suppose the walk is morally neutral (*NE* 1175b26), possessing no value that could affect the species of it or the perception of it). Since the path from S to E is infinitely divisible, the walking from S to E is infinitely divisible into changes that are parts of the whole, which parts differ specifically from each other and the whole, the species of the change is not determined until it is over, the walk has an end point which is its limit, and so on. But then likewise the perception of the walk or enjoyment in perceiving the walk seem to be divisible into different stages that are specifically different,[50] to belong to species that are not fixed until the walk is over, to have a limit. If Aristotle were to deny that seeing a change is an activity, he would have no account of what kind of entity the enjoyment in perceiving the walk might be. Further, if a pleasure and the activity on which it supervenes are so alike that it is debatable as to whether they are the same or different, how can the pleasure in seeing the change be an activity if the seeing on which it supervenes is not an activity?

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[48] Halliwell (1986: 67) quoting 1449b25–31. See his discussion (65–81) of the different types of aesthetic pleasure relevant to Aristotle's position.

[49] Waterlow (1982: 189–90); Kosman (1988: 179).

Of the various problems set out in section 6, the only one to which Aristotle might have a reasonable reply is (9). The fullest expression of its claim about the case of seeing is found at *Soph. El.* 178a10–11: 'It is possible at the same time to see something and have seen *the same thing* with respect to the same thing' (ὁρâν γέ τι ἅμα καί ἑωράκεναι τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ κατὰ ταὐτὸ ἐνδέχεται). It is likely that the objects perceived here are meant to include things such as *Socrates* which can be seen in different respects, say with respect to different parts of the body or different colors. If Aristotle is thinking of the objects of sight as colours alone, or as including colours, then, presumably, one respect in which white could be seen would be, say, *as Diares' son*.

Aristotle might use this clarification in reply to a possible objection to (9). If Xing is an activity, one has Xed as soon as one Xes. But it seems that it is wrong to say that I hear and have heard the symphony at the same time. Likewise, seeing is, we might think, supposed to be an activity. But if I am in the process of seeing the British Museum, it appears wrong to say that I have seen it until the viewing is over. The British Museum is a whole which I have not completely seen during the course of seeing it. Aristotle is aware of such cases (*Poet.* 1450b39–1451a1) but makes no attempt to relate them to the present problem.

What Aristotle could do, and what ought to be done in any case, is to distinguish two types of 'seeing'. 'Seeing the British Museum' as used above means something like 'visually examining its contents'. This is not an activity but a sequence of activities. That kind of seeing should be distinguished from perceiving the British Museum with my eyes when I drive by the museum in a bus: then I have seen it as soon as I see it, I have perceived it with my eyes as soon as I do so. Aristotle recognizes this use in the passage from the *De Sophisticis Elenchis*: as soon as I see the British Museum in a certain respect, as soon as I see a part, I have seen it. This is an activity and there is no violation of (9). Precisely the same reply can be made to the case of hearing the symphony and perceiving change. 'Hearing the symphony' as used above is the auditory parallel of visually examining the British Museum.[51] But we can also say that I have heard Mahler's Fifth as soon as I hear a part of it, as soon as I hear it in a certain respect. Likewise with the perception of change, as soon as I see a part of it I have seen it. Application of the perfect does not require perception of the entire object of perception.[52] This answers a possible objection against (9).

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[50] Though, as *Parva Nat.* 445b27–446a20 says, we cannot perceive an unlimited number of parts of the path, we can still perceive some parts of it.

Even if this answers the problem of (9), it does nothing to solve the other difficulties, all of which remain. Since any change takes time, Aristotle thinks that change and time must be perceived together (*Phys.* 4.11). Consequently, there is no first moment of perceiving change, the perception of change must itself take time, the species of a perception of change depends on the future in the same way as the species of a change, the perception of change appears to be divisible into specifically different parts, and so on.[53] Nor can the perception of change possibly be a change itself:[54] there are no qualities available such that a specific case of the perception of change could be said to be by definition a transition from one quality that is lost to another that is gained by the perceiving subject. So if Aristotle denies that perceiving a change is an activity, then, since it certainly cannot be reduced to a discrete sequence of individual activities, there is no entity of any kind available in his ontology with which it can be identified. Likewise for any pleasure which supervenes on such a perception.

13. Problems for thought and its supervening pleasures

We saw that the *Nicomachean Ethics* and *De Anima* commit Aristotle to inconsistent accounts of how to fix the species of perception. According to the first *perceiving the son of Diares* may be a species of perception whereas according to *De Anima* it is not since the proper objects of the different senses determine the species of perceptions; and the son of Diares is an accidental object of seeing. This problem does not arise in the case of thought. Setting aside *de re* readings of ascriptions of thought, *thinking of Smith* cannot be dismissed as merely an accidental description of a thought in the way that *seeing Smith* is an accidental description of a perception. Rather, *thinking of the white thing* (*qua* white thing) and *thinking of Smith* (*qua* Smith) will be two numerically and specifically different thoughts.

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[51] And either can go quickly, as in 'I had to see the museum more quickly than I wanted to'. Penner tries to account for the 'half-sense' we can make of 'I am seeing the movie quickly' and 'I am hearing the symphony quickly' by making the perceived object a change; and then this change rather than the perceiving is what is modified by 'quickly' or 'slowly' (1970: 420–1). But this cannot solve the problem since the object of perception in the above example, the museum or its contents, can obviously not be understood as a change or as something that is quick or slow.

[52] The same point applies to Penner's example of seeing a film (1970: 443).

[53] Since *De Anima* explains the species of a perception in terms of the species of its object, the species of a perception of change depends on the species of the perceived change. As the species of any change depends on its path, it follows that the starting point, end point, and path of a perceived change play an essential role in determining the species of the perception of that change. So even if (contrary to n. 51 above) Penner had succeeded in showing that seeing, etc. cannot be quick or slow (1970: 421), he would not have shown that 'the conditions of identity of seeing and enjoying will not include starting point and end point'.

[54] As Bostock claims (2000: 165).

But while, perhaps,[55] thoughts of individual concepts or individuals cause no problems for Aristotle's general claims about activities, thoughts of propositions do. Aristotle views the linguistic statement, the object of thought, and the thinking of that object as structurally parallel. An uncombined word such as 'white' or 'man' expresses a specific concept (νόημα) which Aristotle identifies with the thinking of it (*De An.* 407a6–10). A specifically undivided concept can be thought in an undivided time (*De An.* 430b14–15). Presumably the same point holds when thinking of uncombined genera or individuals. So, perhaps, with an uncombined object of thought one at the same time thinks and has thought it, the thought is specifically indivisible, and so forth.

But the parallel also holds with statements that are combinations of words. A statement is a combination of words expressing an object of thought which is a combination of concepts.[56] As before, Aristotle identifies the thinking of such an object of thought with the object itself. The 'unity' of the linguistic statement, the object of thought, and the thinking is the same. A statement is not a continuum but a succession of discrete items that do not touch or join at a common boundary, just as the number series is a succession of discrete numbers.[57]

Likewise the concepts expressed by the words in a statement are combined, but not in such a way as to remove their distinctness and 'distance' from one another. Once again comparing the situation with the number series, Aristotle considers the concepts expressed in a statement to form a succession of discrete concepts.[58] And since the thinking of the object of thought *is* this succession of concepts, the thinking of the proposition expressed by the statement will have the same sort of unity:[59] the thought of the whole proposition divides into a series of discrete thoughts which follow one another without touching or being unified into a continuum.

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[55] *De An.* 3.6 raises serious questions about this. There (430b6–14), Aristotle regards the time of the thought of a continuous magnitude such as a line as 'undivided' in the same way as the line is undivided. But if the time of the thought of a line is potentially divided, then the thought of the individual is spread out over time rather than being complete as soon as it exists, one has not thought of the line as soon as one is thinking it, etc. 430b14–16 may be contrasting this case with the thought of what is one in species by saying that the latter can be thought in an indivisible 'time'.

[56] *De Int.* 16a13–16; *De An.* 430a26–8, 432a11–12.

[57] *Cat.* 4b22–3, 32–7; *Phys.* 220b2–3, 227a17–21, 29–32; *Meta.* 1085a3–5.

[58] *De An.* 407a6–10. See *De Lin. Insec.* 969a33–b2.

[59] Ibid.

But if so, then, if thinking of a proposition is supposed to be an activity, it appears to be a case that violates many of Aristotle's claims about activities. Contrary to (4), a thought is divisible into distinct temporal parts. Contrary to (6), a thought is divisible into specifically different elements. As a temporally extended entity, it is not the case that one thinks and has thought it at the same time. Contrary to (9), and, contrary to (10) and (11), the thought is not complete as soon as it exists, any more than counting from 1 to 50 is complete as soon as the counting starts. Contrary to (12), the species of the thought cannot be determined as soon as the thinking starts; nor is the numerical identity of the thought fixed as soon as the thinking starts, contrary to (13). The thought of the proposition has a kind of limit and cannot continue indefinitely, contrary to (14); and in a clear sense the thinking of the thought can be quick or slow, even if it lacks a path, contrary to (15). Whether or not such an entity can be said to exist in a moment, it cannot exist for one and only one moment, contrary to (17). And, contrary to (20), there will be generation of an activity in the same way in which there is generation of change: its existence will consist in one part after another coming to be.

At times Aristotle explicitly ascribes to discursive thought attributes that clash with the characteristics of activities. Unlike an activity, he says that an instance of practical reasoning has a limit where it must stop[60] and is not an end but a means to a further end.[61] Unlike an activity, theoretical thought—whether of a definition or a demonstration—has a limit.[62]

Once again, given Aristotle's insistence on the intimate relationship between an activity and the pleasure that supervenes on it, these difficulties are reproduced in the case of the enjoyment of discursive thought. If the pleasure one takes in thinking is so like the thinking on which the pleasure supervenes that it is debatable as to whether they are one and the same entity, then the pleasure, like the thought, must be divisible, have a limit, and so on.

The problem is not solved by asserting that propositional thought is a change rather than an activity. Thinking that man is mortal is not by definition a transition in a subject from one quality, quantity, or place to another that replaces the lost feature. There are no properties such that thinking man is mortal *is* by definition the acquisition of one and the loss of the other; to think of what I know is not to lose or acquire any features.[63] Of course, Aristotle thinks that I can undergo an alteration and acquire the quality knowledge by reviewing and thinking over the relevant material. But this is to say that such thinking can *cause* the alteration from ignorance to the quality of knowledge. For example, if I review a proof of a geometrical theorem until I understand it and can set out the proof of what I have learnt, neither thinking any step nor thinking of the entire proof *was* the move from ignorance to knowledge. Rather this thinking caused the resulting knowledge. When I see the colour red this may well cause me to come to know what I did not know before but this in no way implies that seeing red *is* the acquisition of the knowledge I thereby acquire, or that seeing red is the alteration to this knowledge from ignorance.

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[60] *De An.* 407a23–4; *NE* 1113a5–7.

[61] *De An.* 407a24; *Pol.* 1325b18–19.

[62] *De An.* 407a24–31.

[63] For the same reason Aristotle is not committed, as some claim, to saying that occurrences or events such as sonatas that divide into different stages and are not complete as soon as they exist are changes. (See Gosling and Taylor 1982: 313: 'playing the Moonlight Sonata is a *kinesis* by all Aristotle's criteria: it consists of a sequence of distinct stages, is complete only when it is over and can be done quickly or slowly'; Penner 1970: 420; Frede 2006: 266.) But the features cited do not suffice to make the playing of the sonata a change. It is not the case that there are any qualities, quantities, or places x and y such that the playing *is* by definition the loss of x and

One might try to deal with some of these problems by saying that, for example, the Greek verb νοεῖν should be translated with the non-continuous present, and indicates not a process of thinking but intellectual perception or insight.[64] Then it is at least less clear that it is wrong to say that one has thought a proposition at the same time as one thinks it. It is not clear that there is any use of 'thinks' where it is not the case that *A has thought 'Man is mortal'* at the same time as *A thinks 'Man is mortal'*. Likewise with the verb νοεῖν in Aristotle's Greek. But even if we accepted this it would not by any means solve all the problems. For example, it remains the case that the thought has a limit, is divisible into specifically different parts, and so on.

Further, this cannot be Aristotle's position. *De Anima*'s explanation of the thinking of a proposition as a succession of discrete thoughts shows that he does not understand the thinking of a proposition in this non-discursive way. This comes out in his description of thinking at *Physics* 208a20–1: 'Time indeed and change are infinite, and also thinking (νόησις), in the sense that each part that is taken passes in succession out of existence (οὐχ ὑπομένοντος τοῦ λαμβανομένου).' This is precisely what is not supposed to be true of an activity.

Another suggestion would be that no problem arises for Aristotle because he does not consider the thinking of a proposition to be a *single* activity but a series of discrete activities. It might be considered most improbable that Aristotle would regard a series of *discrete* thoughts as a single activity, and then the apparent clashes with his general claims about activities noted above disappear.

But there are serious problems with this proposal. First, in *Meta*. 9.6 Aristotle lists *eudaimonia* and living well as examples of activities. We know that Aristotle holds that there are two kinds of *eudaimonia*: contemplation and the exercise of the excellences of character. Even if, as I believe,[65] the kind of *eudaimonia*

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the acquisition of y in either the performer or the instrument of performance. For Aristotle, *having played the sonata* and *having had the sonata played on x*, are no more qualities, quantities, or places than *having heard the sonata* or *having 'sounded' the sonata* are.

[64] Thus Graham (1980: 122–3): 'νόησις is immediate insight, not a process of cogitation or calculation'. See (Bostock 2000: 165).

[65] I discuss this problem in Heinaman (1996: 96–9). I understand *Meta*. 9.6's claim to be that the highest form of *eudaimonia*, contemplation, is an activity. This does not mean that changes

which *Meta.* Θ.6 wishes to count as an activity does not include virtuous action, it seems hard to believe that the kind of contemplation with which Aristotle identifies *eudaimonia* does not include the contemplation of definitions or proofs or theorems. It is *possible* that Aristotle is thinking only of the indivisible contemplation of god, since nothing in the *Meta.* Θ.6 passage indicates that it is only human eudaimonia that is in question, and god's *eudaimonia* consists in nothing but thinking of god. In fact this interpretation is positively supported by several passages in Aristotle's writings which show that at least the highest form of *eudaimonia* for human beings is the contemplation of god.[66] Similarly, in *Meta.* 9.6, Aristotle lists living as an activity but he must mean only that the highest forms of living are activities[67]: being nourished and growing are forms of living but since these are changes in the body they cannot be activities.

But *if*, as seems very plausible, *eudaimonia* in *Meta.* 9.6 covers the contemplation of complex objects such as theorems and proofs, then the problems noted above remain.

There is also a second reason why the problems will not be solved by restricting activities to thoughts of individual concepts. The same kind of problem that arose with regard to the enjoyment of perceptions will arise in the case of the enjoyment of thinking. Recall that a pleasure and the activity on which it supervenes are so alike that it is a debatable question as to whether or not they are the same entity. If an activity and its attendant pleasure are *so* alike, then, on the proposal in question, the great pleasure I get in thinking that the triangle is a three-sided plane figure would be reduced to a series of different pleasures: my enjoyment in thinking of triangle, my enjoyment in thinking 'is', and so on. But just as the enjoyment of a musical phrase is not a series of enjoyments of individual notes contained in the phrase, so my enjoyment in thinking of a definition, proof, or theorem is not a series of enjoyments of thoughts of the particular concepts that go to make up the definitions, theorems, and proofs. So if Aristotle restricted activities to thoughts of particular concepts and their supervening pleasures his account of pleasure would fail to deal with a large number of cases.

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that are virtuous actions do not count as *eudaimonia*, just as Aristotle's statement at the close of *NE* 10.8 that *eudaimonia* 'is a kind of contemplation' (1178b32) does not contradict what X.8 has just explained: that virtuous action is a secondary kind of *eudaimonia*. Similarly, *Metaphysics* 9.6, 1048b25–6's assertion that living is an *energeia* can only mean that the highest forms of living are *energeiai* (see *Protrepticus* B78–85). For Aristotle, *eudaimonia* is a certain kind of living, and (see n. 67) he considers certain kinds of bodily *changes* to be forms of living.

[66] *NE* 1141a8–20, b2–3, 1177a12–21, 1178b21–7; *Meta.* 983a5–11, 1072b14–15, 18–19, 24–6; *EE* 1249b13–15; *Protrepticus* (Düring) 86, 91, 105. See *De An.* 402a1–3.

[67] See *NE* 1170a16–19, *EE* 1244b23–8. Aristotle believes that the changes of nutrition and growth are also kinds of living. See, for example, *NE* 1098a1 and *De An.* 413a22–5: *πλεοναχῶς δὲ τοῦ ζῆν λεγομένου, κἂν ἕν τι τούτων ἐνυπάρχῃ μόνον, ζῆν αὐτό φαμεν, οἷον νοῦς, αἴσθησις, κίνησις καὶ στάσις ἡ κατὰ τόπον, ἔτι κίνησις ἡ κατὰ τροφὴν καὶ φθίσις τε καὶ αὔξησις.*

None of the problems I have brought up indicate that Aristotle is committed to saying that pleasure, perception, or thought are changes. For none of the problems commit Aristotle to saying that any case of perception, thought, or pleasure *is* by definition a transition from one quantity, quality, or place to another such that the subject at the end of the thought, perception, or pleasure possesses a new feature and has lost another. For example, in the case of thinking a definition unlike the case of changing from white to black, the object of the verb specifies a series of concepts which are objects of thought for the person rather than a series of qualities *exhibited by* the person.

Even in a case where A thinks through a proof and thereby comes to know p—and acquires knowledge, a new quality—thinking the proof may *cause* the knowledge but the thinking through the proof cannot be *identified with* the acquisition of knowledge. The specifically same kind of event—thinking through the proof—that occurs in the learner may occur in a person with knowledge who does not learn the theorem when thinking of what he knows. If, in the case of the knowledgeable person, thinking through the proof is not a transition from ignorance to knowledge, is not a case of learning, then likewise in the case of the learner thinking through the proof cannot be said to *be* the learning, the transition from ignorance to knowledge. So thinking through the proof cannot be said to *be* a move from ignorance to knowledge. Furthermore, the end of the sequence which is the thinking of the proof is a *thought* of the conclusion, where the *thought* of the conclusion cannot of course be identified with the *quality* which is the knowledge of the conclusion.

2

Aristotle's Theory of the Emotions: Emotions as Pleasures and Pains

Jamie Dow

Does what Aristotle has to say about the emotions in *Rhet.* 2.1–11 amount to a fully fledged theory of the emotions? If he does have a theory of the emotions, is it still credible?

Some have insisted that in the *Rhetoric,* Aristotle offers no theory of the emotions, merely 'a preliminary, purely dialectical investigation that clarifies [some of] the phenomena in question' (Cooper 1996a: 238–9, 251–2).[1] Others detect here no quest by Aristotle for a theory of the emotions of his own. Instead, he simply presents a set of definitions that are the results of the best available substitute: theories developed in the Academy (Striker 1996: 287–8), perhaps specifically the view developed in Plato's *Philebus* of the emotions as mixed pleasures and pains (D. Frede 1996: 258–60).

The view defended here is that *Rhet.* 2.1–11 expresses Aristotle's *own* theory of the emotions, not merely an endorsement of Plato's or anyone else's theory. His account of course has limitations, and his theory is in certain respects not 'fully fledged':[2] Aristotle's aims are confined to what is required for a treatise on rhetoric. Nevertheless, Aristotle's remarks in *Rhet.* 2.1–11 do present a theory of the emotions.[3] Not only that, I argue that his theory has some substantial philosophical advantages lacked by many modern theories of emotion. That is, his philosophy of the emotions is still credible.

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[1] Indeed, (*pace* Cooper) there is little in *Rhetoric* 2.1–11 that might be properly described as a 'dialectical' investigation: there is very little mention of alternative views or puzzles to be resolved (though see 1386b16–24 for an exception), little evidence indeed of anything like the early or 'preliminary' stages of the method of inquiry set out at *NE* 7.1, 1145b2–7.

[2] The treatment of the emotions in the *Rhetoric* is aptly contrasted by Cooper (1996a: 239) with the ethical works and the *De Anima,* and by Striker (1996: 287) with the *Topics* and the *Analytics*.

[3] I shall use 'emotions' and 'passions' interchangeably. The assumption that our talk of emotions and Aristotle's discussion in *Rhetoric* 2 of '*ta pathê*' are about the same thing cannot be defended here. See Striker (1996: 299n1); Konstan (2006: esp. ch.1).

His theory, I propose, is as follows. Passions simply *are* states of pain or pleasure (or both). This can be understood in terms of two key claims.

Claim 1:
To have an emotion is to experience (one kind of) pain, pleasure, or both.

Claim 2:
The pain and pleasure involved in having an emotion is pain/pleasure that is intentional and representational: it is pain/pleasure at the emotion's object or 'target' and involves that target being represented in ways that give 'grounds' for the particular emotion experienced.

Thus, being afraid of the bear is to experience pain, and this is pain at the bear, at the bear's being a source of future harm (i.e. fearsome).

In section 1 below, I defend the view that these claims represent Aristotle's understanding of emotion in *Rhet.* 2.1–11. This includes consideration of some kinds of Aristotelian emotion that appear to involve no pleasure or pain. Section 2 focuses particularly on claim 2, and the kinds of pleasure and pain involved in emotions, according to *Rhet.* 2.1–11. This generates a question about whether Aristotle has an account of pleasure and pain that can accommodate pleasures and pains of the required kind. In section 3 this question is considered briefly in relation to the accounts of pleasure (and pain) in the ethical works, and in section 4 in relation to the account of pleasure in *Rhet.* 1.11. Section 5 turns from exegesis of the *Rhetoric* to canvassing the philosophical merits of the theory of emotions that has emerged from Aristotle's texts.

1. Aristotle's understanding of emotion in *Rhetoric* 2.1–11

Claim 1: Emotions as Pleasures and Pains

Pleasure and pain are regularly connected in Aristotle's writings with the passions.[4] It is no surprise, therefore, that a prominent part of his definition of the passions at 1378a19–21 is that the passions are 'accompanied by (Gk: *hepetai*) pain and pleasure'. One obvious thing Aristotle may have in mind here is to recognize the distinctive phenomenology of the passions. But beyond this, questions remain. In particular, how does he conceive of the relationship between emotions and pain and pleasure,[5] which he regularly characterizes by the use of *'hepetai'* (literally: 'follow upon')?[6] The picture can be filled out by attention to Aristotle's references to pain and pleasure in his accounts of the various types of emotion in *Rhetoric* 2.2–11.

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[4] See *NE* 2.5, 1105b21–23; *EE* 1220b12–14; *MM* 1.8.2.

[5] Aristotle's position here is importantly related to that of Socrates at *Philebus* 46b–c and 47d–50c, but it need not be taken as endorsing the view that each emotion involves *both* pain *and* pleasure (*pace* D. Frede 1996: 258–60).

HEPETAI *('accompanies') in Aristotle*

Within Aristotle, there seems to be a variety of usage of *hepesthai* (to accompany/ follow). Occasionally this verb is used (like the English 'to follow') simply to indicate that one things comes after another.[7] But by far its most common usage in Aristotle is of the following kind. To say that A *hepetai* B is to say that wherever you find B you also find A. This is obviously important in Aristotelian logic in warranting inference (accordingly, *hepetai* is one of the standard words used in premises in the *Prior Analytics*). But it also indicates, for example, to the orator what to expect from, say, wealthy people, 'The kinds of character that *go with (hepetai)* wealth are obvious for all to see...' (*Rhet.* 2.16, 1390b32). The inference Aristotle encourages the orator to make here from someone's wealth to their character would be reasonable in virtue of the fact that some contingent generalization holds. More commonly, however, when Aristotle asserts that wherever you find B you find A (A *hepetai* B), the connection to which he is drawing attention is that B *by its very nature implies* A. Unsurprisingly this latter usage is typical in logical contexts (e.g. 'in every case where you get man or footed thing generally you get animal', *An. Pr.* 56a28–9). But it is also easily the most common usage elsewhere too (e.g. *De Anima* 3.3, 'wherever you get belief you get conviction'), and accordingly in several places in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Terence Irwin even translates *hepetai* with 'implies' (e.g. '[the right sort of] giving implies doing good', 1120a14, where it is clear that the former implies the latter *in virtue of what it is* to give correctly).[8]

Since there is such a strong statistical presumption in favour of this latter use of *hepetai*, we should look at Aristotle's own careful distinctions within this kind of usage. These come in a couple of passages, one of which is in the *Rhetoric* itself, at I.7.1363b28ff.[9]

> (We say that that is a greater good than this) also whenever this goes with (*hepetai*) that, but that doesn't go with this. And one thing goes with something else simultaneously or subsequently or potentially: the use of the former is present in the use of the latter. Being alive goes with being healthy simultaneously, but not *vice versa*; understanding goes with

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[6] See also references at note 4 above.

[7] Mostly this usage in Aristotle indicates simply a transition to the next subject of discussion, for example *NE* 1111b5, 1172a19. *Hepetai* at 1168a21 may indicate merely temporal sequence (perhaps hinting also at a causal connection), but seems equally plausibly interpreted as marking implication.

[8] See *NE* 1120a14, a26, b32; Irwin (1985a).

[9] See also *Topics* 117a5–15.

learning subsequently; and stealing goes with temple-robbery potentially (anyone who has committed temple-robbery has it in them to steal).

The last case (temple-robbery and stealing) does not seem a good candidate for elucidating the usage of *hepetai* at 1378a21, but in the first two examples, the connection signalled by *hepetai* is between two things one of which is part of the essence of the other. Being alive is part of the essence of being healthy, since being healthy is *a way of* being alive. Likewise, one has not learned unless one subsequently understands (or 'knows')—it is essential to learning that it is the achieving of a state of *having learned*, indeed, of understanding.

This passage cannot mandate a particular interpretation of 1378a21: what is *directly asserted* by '*hepetai*' at 1378a21 is nothing stronger than concurrence. However, it highlights the fact that when Aristotle says that pleasure and pain 'follow' the passions, although he may have in mind as loose a connection as that pleasure and pain states tend to occur in conjunction with states of passion distinct from them, nevertheless he is more likely to have in mind a tighter connection such as that pain or pleasure is essential to being a passion.[10] Usage elsewhere in Aristotle, as exemplified in the above passage, certainly suggests this. I shall argue that Aristotle's view is the stronger connection proposed in claim 1 above, that emotions *are* (kinds of) pleasures or pains or both. This can be best seen in how strongly Aristotle associates pleasure and, more especially, pain with the individual passions that he goes on to discuss.

However, let us pause briefly to consider the plausibility to Aristotle of the view of emotions as pleasures and pains. It is easy to be misled into thinking that its plausibility to Aristotle would have been low by the fact that it has not been widely advocated in the contemporary debates about the nature of emotions.[11] One reason for this might be that pains and pleasures have sometimes been thought to have phenomenal but not representational qualities.[12] However, it is clear that for both Plato and Aristotle, pain and pleasure were indeed both intentional and representational. In the *Philebus*, Socrates' position is that pain and pleasure represent their objects as being a certain way, and can be false.[13] Likewise, the view of emotions advocated in the *Philebus* is that they are mixed pleasures and pains. Hence, if Aristotle thought that emotions were pleasures and pains, and that the latter were representational states, he was adopting a recognisable and plausible position within his philosophical tradition. We will consider below how plausible this view is to *us*, the point here is that there is nothing prima facie implausible about attributing such a view to *him*.

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[10] Aristotle does not seem to hold that pleasure or pain is the *genus* of the passions, nor, when he writes, 'x is a pain at...' need he be interpreted as making a claim about x's *genus* (*pace* Cooper 1996a: 245 and D. Frede 1996: 259). By analogy, suppose nausea is a dull pain at the surging of the sea, this is still compatible with its *genus* being sensation. The *genus* of the passions was clearly a matter of discussion in the Academy, at least in relation to anger (*Topics* 127b26–32., 150b27–151a19, 156a32–3; See *Rhet.* 1378a30–2.), and it is clear from Aristotle's definition of anger in the *Rhetoric* ('Let anger be a desire...', 1378a30) that he was not concerned to defend the view that the *genus* of anger, still less that of all emotions, is pain or pleasure. See section 5 below for a philosophical merit of pleasure and pain's not being the *genus* of emotions.

[11] Though see Goldstein (2002) and Helm (2001) for two exceptions.

[12] For example McGinn (1982: 80). Note, however, several recent defenders of representational views of pain and pleasure, Bain (2003), Tye (2006), Prosser (2007); see also Crane (1998).

Pleasure and pain in the individual accounts of types of passion

In *Rhetoric* 2.2–11, six types of emotion are defined by Aristotle specifically as pains. Fear is defined as 'a kind of pain or disturbance from the appearance of approaching damaging or painful harm' (1382a21f.). Likewise, shame is 'a kind of pain or disturbance at bad things that will apparently bring disgrace' (1383b12–14), and pity is 'a kind of pain at' undeserved suffering (1385b13f.). Indignation is pain at the success of the undeserving (1386b9–11); envy and 'emulation' are kinds of pain at the success of one's equal, the difference between them being whether the pain is felt at the other person's success or at one's own non-attainment of that success (1386b18–21, 1387b23–5; 1388a31–8). Correspondingly, Aristotle clearly recognizes certain emotions as pleasures. The person disposed to pity will feel two other (unnamed) emotions—pleasure at deserved suffering, and pleasure at deserved success. Similarly, the person prone to envy will also be prone to an emotion that is pleasure at the misfortune of their equals, for which English has no name but Aristotle calls *epichairekakia* and German speakers call *Schadenfreude.*

Aristotle's general position on emotions and pleasure and pain

On the most generous count, Aristotle identifies seventeen types of emotion types in *Rhetoric* 2. Of these, as we have seen, six are explicitly defined as pains—pains at something. Three are described as pleasures. So, over half are described explicitly as pleasures or pains. The number rises still further, possibly as high as eleven, if one can count as pleasures any of *praotês* (calmness/satisfaction),[14] *tharsos* (confidence/boldness)[15] and *anaischuntia* (shamelessness), the opposites of three other emotions described explicitly in terms of pain. On *tharsos* and *anaischuntia,* sadly, Aristotle has little enough to say of relevance to our purposes about these 'opposites' but indicates, perhaps less than perspicuously, that we should be able to work the details out from the accounts of fear and shame.[16] This evidence collectively amounts to a strong basis for investigating whether claim 1 above might represent Aristotle's general view of the connection between emotions and pain and pleasure: that emotions simply are pains or pleasures (or perhaps both).[17] The investigation will need to cover whether attributing such a view to Aristotle can accommodate what he actually says about the other emotion types such as gratitude and ingratitude, anger and calmness and friendship and hatred, where his description lacks phrases like 'x is pain and distress at y', and indeed—in the case of hatred—specifically excludes pain. What should be said generally about the 'opposites' to some types of passion, especially where the opposite is most plausibly construed as involving not some opposite pleasure or pain, but the absence of the original passion's pleasure or pain?

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[13] See on this issue Harte (2004).

[14] See Konstan (2006: ch. 3) for the view that *praotês* is a positive emotion ('satisfaction') in its own right. See below on anger as a pain.

[15] See Cooper (1996a: 245), and *NE* 3.9.

Anger, firstly, is not said to be a pain, but a desire with pain. Aristotle was aware of the (evidently) heated debate within the Academy about the genus to which anger belonged.[18] His saying that anger is a desire may express his decisive verdict in favour of desire as the *genus* of anger.[19] Still this is compatible with his thinking that anger is a pain—within the *genus* of desires, there are some desires that are also pains, and anger is one of these. Being a pain would thus be the *differentia* that marks out the desires that are pains from those that are not. And the contents of the pain, namely 'at what one takes to be an unwarranted slight of oneself or one's associates' plus the type of object of the desire, namely 'for what one takes to be revenge', are the *differentiae* that mark out cases of anger from other states that are both desires and pains. In support of this reading of Aristotle's definition, we should note that his phrase 'on account of what one takes to be a slight' (a31) seems to apply to the state as a whole. Thus it was somewhat misleading above to assign this as the content of the pain, while 'what one takes to be revenge' (a30) was assigned as the object of the desire. Aristotle's formulation suggests that both apply to the state as a whole: thus anger is a desire-cum-pain for purported revenge, on account of a purported slight.[20]

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[16] 1383a13–16; 1385a14–15. On balance, I think it more likely that Aristotle considered *anaischuntia* not a pleasure but a privation of shame. On such privations, see below.

[17] Arguably anger is both a pleasure and a pain, though support for this in *Rhetoric* II.2 is at best equivocal.

[18] *Top.* 127b26–32., 150b27–151a19, 156a32–3

[19] It may not. The definition need not be interpreted as stating anger's *genus*. Aristotle's having written the definition thus, even if he did not think that anger's *genus* was desire, might be best understood alongside his use elsewhere of Platonic-sounding tripartite psychology. See *Rhetoric* 1.10, 1.11 (discussed below), Striker (1996: 289), and especially Rowe (2003).

[20] Following Homer, Plato, and several others, Aristotle recognizes that anger also has its pleasures: 'associated (*hepesthai*) with every case of anger there is a certain pleasure from the expectation of getting revenge' (1378b1–2). This seems to be Aristotle's way of insisting that pleasure as well as pain is essential to anger without saying, 'anger is a pleasure' which might be taken as a claim about anger's *genus*.

The next passions to consider are *charin echein* (gratitude) and *acharistia* (ingratitude).[21] There is no mention of their involving pleasure or pain in the chapter (2.7) devoted to them.[22] By anyone's lights, the chapter is puzzling—it appears to be wholly devoted to an analysis of what it is to do someone a 'favour', and it is supposed to be obvious (*dêlon*, 1385a16) how this amounts to an elucidation of a kind of *emotion*. There is in fact no explicit material here on the emotion itself. Commentators even divide over what emotion is under discussion here![23] I shall assume that the case is decisive in favour of the emotion's being '*charin echein*', and its being gratitude. Even so, the same difficulty recurs—the focus is so much on the act of kindness that justifies the feelings of gratitude (of course, this is precisely the material the orator needs for stirring up these feelings) that we can only guess at the involvement or absence of pleasure or pain in the feelings that result. Perhaps there might be an interesting interplay between the two in this case—one feels pleasure at the kindness, but pain at the sense of obligation, especially if it involves a considerable or insuperable burden to discharge. Still, this remains speculation and goes beyond Aristotle's text. It is interesting that Aristotle's discussion of this pair of emotions focuses *entirely* on the conceptual detail of how the emotion's potential subjects take things to be, that is, on whether they understand some person's actions to have been a 'favour' or not. But it does not seem that this pair of passions can count strongly either for or against claims about the involvement of pleasure and pain in the passions.

Love/friendship and hostility (*Rhet.* 2.4) probably pose the greatest problems for the suggestion that all Aristotelian emotions involve pleasure and/or pain. Indeed, Aristotle explicitly says that hostility does not involve pain (1382a12–13). As he describes it, *philia* seems to be not a *pathos* at all, but a disposition to *pathê*, namely towards pleasure in relation to the friend, to the activities involved in friendship, but (more relevantly for rhetorical scenarios) also pleasure in relation to the friend's success and well-being (Striker 1996: 301n13; Cooper 1996a: 244). The same disposition is a disposition to distress at any harm to the friend's interests or to his person. From a rhetorical point of view, one can see that knowing how to produce this *disposition* in a listener is a much more useful skill than knowing how to produce particular episodes of friendly emotion, episodes of friendly pleasure or friendly distress. In the courts and the assembly, the speaker wants the listeners to feel a particular way about (e.g.)

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[21] The translation of these terms is controversial. See below note 23.

[22] Pain is mentioned only as part of elucidating needs, which are in turn used to elucidate what a favour (*charis*) is.

[23] For Cooper (1996a: 242–3), it is *charis*, understood either as the motivation behind kindly acts (see Cope 1877 and Kennedy 1991) or as a kindly feeling that listeners might feel towards one who has treated them well. For Striker (1996: 301n15), Rapp (2002), and Konstan (2006: ch. 7), the emotion is *charin echein*, and is feeling grateful (possibly with a connotation of obligation; see Konstan (2006: 164–8)).

Aristides not just now but at the end of the debate, or at the vote, and this might be next week, or after some opposing speeches. This might account for why here Aristotle's focus shifts from passions themselves to dispositions to passions. Still, it is disappointing that Aristotle does not distinguish more carefully between passions themselves and passionate dispositions. My suggestion, then, is that strictly speaking, as Aristotle defines them, *philia* and *echthra* are not passions. But they are dispositions to passions—and Aristotle *does* explicitly point out that *philia* involves a disposition to feel pleasure along with a friend at good things, and pain at distressing or painful things (1381a3–5). (And this comes so early on in his account, that it may be Aristotle's hint at how *philia* fits into his general picture of the passions.) With hostility, there are two possible ways to integrate it into the proposed picture of the passions as pleasures and pains.[24] One is to insist that Aristotle is merely insisting (correctly) that hostility—considered as a disposition—is without pain, and that this is consistent with his agreeing that the episodes to which it disposes its possessor do involve pain. Admittedly, this is awkward as an interpretation of 1382a12–13 because hostility is contrasted with anger—and it is clearly *episodes* of anger that are in view (Leighton 1996: 232–3n14 and Fortenbaugh 2002: 107n1). Still, I am inclined to think that this is what Aristotle *should have said* here.

The other strategy for reconciling hostility with what I am suggesting is Aristotle's general view of emotions involves treating hostility simply as the privation of love/friendship. This strategy is important, in that it may well also be the right way to explain why 'calmness', 'shamelessness', and 'ingratitude' appear in Aristotle's list of passions, when they do not seem (even by Aristotle's own lights) to qualify as passions, being rather *privations* of some particular kind of passion.[25] For it seems plausible to think that Aristotle's accounts of the 'opposite' passions do not stand on their own, but should be taken as part of the pair in which they are presented. Thus, these 'opposites' are not themselves passions but are privations of their opposite which in each case *is* a passion. A clear indication in this direction is his description of *anaischuntia* as 'some kind of disdain and emotionlessness (*apatheia*) in relation to these same things [viz. the objects of shame]' (1383b14–15).[26] To the extent that each of these states involves no pleasure or pain (as merely the privation of another kind of state), strictly speaking, it does not belong in a list of the *pathê*. But there is equally clearly an important sense in which these states do belong exactly where we find them. The aspiring orator needs to know both how to arouse and to dispel each type of emotion, and—insofar as Aristotle has things to say about what we might call the 'privations'—this is exactly the kind of thing he says about them, and the kind of explanation he offers of why it is useful to understand how to bring someone into such a state.[27] In short, Aristotle's goal in this section of giving a good account of the passions is subordinate to his larger goal of setting out the expertise of rhetoric. Thus, it is, I suggest, no serious objection to the proposal about how Aristotle sees the connection between emotions and pleasure and pain, that it entails that some of the states named in *Rhet.* 2.1–11 are not strictly emotions.

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[24] Fortenbaugh's suggestion (2002: 107n2) that Aristotle has two distinct conceptions of hostility does not solve the problem of how to make sense of hostility's apparent classification as a *pathos* in the *Rhetoric*.

[25] How pressing this worry is may vary among the types of states listed. See, for example, below on *praotês*.

[26] Konstan (2006: ch. 3) argues that *praotês* is an emotion in its own right, and is satisfaction. Grimaldi (1989) agrees, as does Cooper (1996a: 242 and n4). Cope (1877) disagrees. Whatever one's view on the disputed cases, clearly some 'opposites' are emotions in their own right (for example indignation) and equally clearly some are merely privations (for example shamelessness). Confidence (*tharsos*) is described as being 'without emotion' (*apatheis*) at 1383a28, but See *NE* 3.9.

Summary of how the proposed view fits the evidence of Rhetoric *2.1–11.*

The proposed view, then, is that Aristotle thinks that all emotions are states of pleasure, pain, or both. His treatment of the passions in *Rhetoric* 2.1–11 reflects this explicitly in many cases with emotions described as 'a pain' or 'desire-cum-pain' in the case of anger. Apparent exceptions are explained simply as Aristotle's attention shifting from the emotion type to the associated disposition (in the case of *philia,* possibly also *to misein*), or as Aristotle's having included in his list some non-emotions because of their rhetorical importance in blocking or calming other states that are emotions.

2. The kinds of pleasure and pain involved in emotions

I turn now to the second claim, that the pains and pleasures involved in emotional experience are intentional and representational—that is, they are pain at X, at X's being F. Let us first review how pleasures and (mostly) pains feature in the accounts of individual emotion types in *Rhetoric* 2.1–11.

Rhetoric 2 *on the pains and pleasures involved in emotions*

This evidence enables us to elaborate on the earlier formulation in which, for Aristotle, the pain and pleasure involved in emotions are pain *at* the emotion's 'target', and pain *at* things being the way that gives 'grounds' for the emotion. In distinguishing target and grounds, I am simply following Aristotle's own directions at 1378a22–4 in the schema he sets out for his accounts of individual

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[27] That this is his purpose in including 'opposites' is suggested by his comments on *praotês* 1380b31–4, on the opposites to pity (1387b16–21; 1388a24–30; 1387a3–5), and on the passions generally (1388b29).

Emotion Type	Phrases involving Pleasure and Pain
anger	desire-cum-pain of what one takes to be[(a)] revenge (gen.) because of (*dia* + acc.) what one takes to be contempt (1378a30–2) pleasure from the hope of being avenged (*apo* + gen.) (1378b1–2)
friendly feelings	sharing a friend's pleasure at good things (dat.) sharing a friend's pain at painful things (dat.) not with anything else in view, but for their sake (1381a3–5)
fear	pain from (*ek* + gen.) the appearance of future harm that is destructive or painful (1382a21–2) pain and distress on account of (*dia* + acc.) this: that something bad might befall him from the other's success (1386b22–4, part of a contrast with *phthonos*)
shame	pain in connection with (*peri* + acc.) bad things that we take it will involve us in disgrace (1383b12–14)
pity	pain at (*epi* + dat.) what is taken to be destructive or painful harm to someone who is undeserving. (1385b13–14) being pained at (*epi* + dat.) undeserved farings-ill (1386b9) sharing distress at (*epi* + dat.) those who undeservedly fare ill. (1386b12–13)
indignation	being pained at (*epi* + dat.) undeserved farings-well (1386b10–11) being pained at (*epi* + dat.) the one taken to be faring well undeservedly (1387a8–9)
envy	disturbing pain at (*epi* + dat.) the faring well of an equal, clarified as pain on account of (*dia* + acc.) that person. (1386b18–21) pain at (*epi* + dat.) what is taken to be faring-well (enjoying) those benefits just mentioned, in connection with (*peri* + acc.) those who are similar ... on account of them (*dia* + acc.) (1387b23–5)
emulation	pain at (*epi* + dat.) what is taken to be the presence of goods which you could get, and in connection with (*peri* + acc.) those similar in nature, not because (*hoti*) the other has them but because you do not. (1388a32–4)
righteous satisfaction	being pleased or without pain at (*epi* + dat.) those who suffer deservedly, when they get their come-uppance (1386b27–9)
happy for	being glad at (*epi* + dat.) those who do well deservedly (1386b30–1)
Schadenfreude	being glad at (*epi* + dat.) the loss and destruction of that which to the same kind of person is an object of pain (*phthonos*) when it comes about and is present [i.e. success for an equal]. (1387a1–3)

[(a)] The exact attitude referred to when Aristotle speaks of how things "appear" (*phantasia, phainesthai*—here taken to indicate how the subject 'takes things to be') in experiencing and emotion is a matter of some controversy that would take us too far afield. The above translations reflect my view, following (e.g.) Nussbaum (1996: 307–8) and Fortenbaugh (2002: 95–100). For an alternative view, cf. Cooper (1996: 246–7); Striker (1996: 291); Sihvola (1996).

emotion types (distinguishing three questions illustrated using the example of anger, 'what kind of condition disposes people to anger, who typically are targets of people's anger, and on what grounds'). But when it comes to the accounts themselves, although he usually keeps to this schema in structuring each section, it seems clear that there is substantial overlap between the accounts of each emotion's targets and grounds. Anger, for example, involves pain at a supposed slight, its grounds are a supposed slight, and its objects are those that we suppose to have slighted us.[28] Thus, typically, the emotion's targets are simply those people or things that instantiate its grounds. So, if the emotion's grounds have been specified, it is a short step to see what kind of people or things will be its targets. Similarly, an adequate specification of the class of some emotion's targets is bound to highlight the features in virtue of which they instantiate its grounds.

This overlap is reflected in the evidence summarised above for the particular pains and pleasures involved in Aristotelian emotions. The most commonly used construction to specify the objects of pain or pleasure is *epi* with the dative. This is used both in specifying the targets of the emotion[29] and their grounds.[30] The cases of pity and indignation are particularly suggestive, since for each, the definition is stated more than once, in different places, but where the formulations vary as to whether it is the grounds or the target that is specified.[31] It seems likely that Aristotle simply considered these formulations interchangeable. A number of other constructions are used, each of which appears to have its own nuance. I will discuss the single usage of each of *ek* and *apo* below. *Peri* and the accusative are used to identify the principal target at which pain is felt,[32] and the dative on its own is used to specify the objects of shared pleasure and pain in friendship. *Dia* and the accusative, and likewise a *hoti* construction, are most often used to offer further clarification within the explanation of the objects of pain.[33] Thus fear is carefully distinguished from envy in that the pain is felt 'because something bad might befall' the subject (1386b22–4), envy involves pain at the success of others 'because of them' (1387b23–5 and implied 1388a32–4), whereas emulation's pain is 'because you do not' have the goods in question (1388a32–4). The point of these clarifications seems to be to identify what precisely in the pained person's outlook is found painful, so as to classify the state as fear, envy, or emulation.

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[28] All this is said to be obvious (*phaneron*) from an understanding of what anger is (II.2, 1379a10f.). The section (1379a30ff.) on anger's objects frequently refers back to the section on slighting (1378b10ff.). For example, someone who ridicules you is an object of anger 'because they are insulting (or committing an outrage against—'*hubrizousi*') you' (1379a31f.). Arguably, the section on slighting is not a separate section on grounds for anger, it merely elucidates the terms of the definition of anger, and Aristotle treats the objects and grounds of anger together. (He appears to say at 1379a10f. that treatment of grounds and objects lies ahead, and to consider this task accomplished by 1380a1ff.) If so, then it must be that grounds are considered covered in the long list of anger's objects at 1379a30ff.) If this is correct, it reinforces my claim above that passions simply involve representing facts or circumstances about their object. Passions' objects and grounds will not easily come apart.

[29] For example pity 1386b12f.; indignation 1387a8f.; righteous satisfaction 1386b27–9; happy for 1386b30f.

[30] For example pity 1385b13f., 1386b9; indignation 1386b10f.; envy 1386b18–21, 1387b23f.; emulation 1388a32f.; *Schadenfreude* 1387a2f.

[31] See references in the table above.

[32] For example shame 1383b12f.; envy 1387b24; emulation 1388a33f.

[33] 1378a31 is an exception.

When Aristotle specifies the pains and pleasures involved in various types of emotion, he seems to be mainly concerned with setting out the circumstances (as the subject takes them to be) at which pain or pleasure is taken. Within this, for some emotions, the relevant situation may centre upon some particular person or thing—the evil feared, the person pitied, the shameful act, the equal envied, and so on—and this is his way of making sense of the way in which emotions can have a specific object (i.e. we can pity someone, be ashamed at something, envy someone, be happy for someone). That the pain and pleasure of emotions is primarily to be understood as taken at a set of circumstances is illustrated by Aristotle's approach to anger and fear. In both of these cases, it seems natural to think that an adequate account of what is involved ought to make sense of how we can be angry at someone, and afraid of someone (or something). In both of these cases, Aristotle's definition is given in terms of pain (or desire-cum-pain) at a kind of state of affairs, apparent slight and future harm. With anger, Aristotle is quick to point out that it always has a particular object, and of course is concerned to make sense of how we can be angry *at someone* (1378a32–b1). But it is interesting that the definition offered specifies the type of *situation* at which pain is felt, and the fact that anger is felt at some *particular* thing (usually a person) is *inferred from* the fact that anger involves pain because of a slight (you cannot be slighted by a *type* of thing). In the case of fear, Aristotle seems much less concerned to offer an account of how we can fear particular things or people. It seems as though the pain of fear is felt at situations and circumstances, rather than at particular objects.

The pain and pleasure of emotion are thus for Aristotle felt at situations or circumstances as the subject represents them. Sometimes there will be some central person or object involved, sometimes not. This account thus requires an account of pain and pleasure that involves representational content, such that the pleasure or pain is felt at that content. The content in question needs to allow for the kind of nuance we have seen, where there can be such subtle differences as exist between the pain of envy and the pain of emulation—where in both the pain involves the representation of the success of an equal, but in one the pain is *because of* the other person's success, and in the other the pain is *because of* the subject's own lack.

The view set out above is at odds with the view taken by William Fortenbaugh in *Aristotle on Emotion* (2002: 12–13, 110–12). He denies that the pain and pleasure involved in emotion is representational, and his suggestion is that Aristotle's position is that emotions are or involve pain and pleasure *caused by* thoughts with the relevant content. Aristotle's view of emotions, on his view, is structurally similar to his view of eclipses as 'deprivation of light from the moon *caused by* the obstruction of the earth'. Thus it is only the thoughts that are intentional and are properly called cognitions, the pains and pleasures are only intentional 'in a derivative way, i.e., through the judgment that is its cause' (2002: 13). The view finds its best textual support in Aristotle's remarks on the pleasures of anger and in his definition of fear. Anger's pleasure is 'from (*apo*) the hope of being avenged' (1378b1f.), and fear is defined as 'a pain from (*ek*) the appearance of future harm' (1382a21f.). These two remarks undoubtedly assert a causal connection between hope and pleasure in the one case and appearance and pain in the other. Perhaps if they were typical of Aristotle's remarks about the pain and pleasure of emotions, Fortenbaugh would have a strong case. But they are not. These are the only examples of constructions using *ek* and *apo* in connection with emotional pleasure or pain. We should set against this the evidence set out above of Aristotle's more usual formulations which are much more naturally interpreted as specifying the representational contents of the pain state itself.[34] While Fortenbaugh's view has difficulty with quite a bit of the relevant material on emotional pleasures and pains, the view that these pains and pleasures are representational has no difficulty with Aristotle's causal remarks about anger and fear. After all, it is natural to suppose that causal relations would hold between thinking that something fearsome is the case and the state of feeling pain *at that same thing*. Likewise, thoughts about getting vengeance are very likely to cause a state of pleasure *at getting vengeance*. Thus the best evidence cited in favour of Fortenbaugh's claim is in fact equally compatible with my claim that Aristotelian emotions involve representational pain and pleasure, and much of the relevant evidence fits my proposal much more naturally.

This view of the kinds of pleasure and pain involved in emotions is not compatible with every view of pleasure and pain. It requires a view of pleasures and pains on which they are representational, and can be felt 'at' the kinds of states of affairs that constitute grounds for emotions. We must now, therefore, investigate whether Aristotle has a suitable account of pleasure and pain, of the kind required by the accounts of the emotions in *Rhet.* 2.1–11.

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[34] Fortenbaugh's suggestion that language involving *dia* and *epi* may be similarly read as purely causal is not convincing. It is possible in some cases (for example 1378a30–2, 1386b22–4), but very implausible in others (for example 1381a3–5; 1387b23–5; see 1388a32–4). It does not seem a natural way of reading *epi* clauses when, as often happens, these are elaborated and explained by further clauses introduced by *peri* and *dia*. Finally, shame's pain is said to be 'in relation to' (*peri* with accusative) bad things leading to disgrace—a formulation not easily read in Fortenbaugh's causal mould.

3. The accounts of pleasure and pain in the ethical works

Pleasure and pain in Aristotle

The fact that Aristotle considers several (even if not all) passions to involve pain and/or pleasure has not gone unnoticed by commentators. It is therefore surprising that the question of how these views fit with his understanding of pleasure and pain themselves has received such scant attention.[35] The question seems to arise whether or not one accepts the position argued for here that for Aristotle emotional pains and pleasures are representational pains and pleasures at (what the subject takes to be) the emotion-relevant circumstances.[36] The focus here will be on whether Aristotelian accounts of pleasure and pain are compatible with the view of emotional pains and pleasures defended above as Aristotle's.

A general problem in answering this question is that his remarks on the emotions touch much more on pain than on pleasure, whereas his accounts of pleasure and pain are almost entirely focused on pleasure. Aristotle seems to suppose that a detailed account of pain can be inferred from what is said in his accounts of pleasure, pleasure and pain being understood presumably as opposites.[37] This is most clearly stated in the account of pleasure at *Rhetoric* 1.11, but seems also intended in the accounts in the *Nicomachean Ethics*.[38]

The most crucial requirement from Aristotelian passions on a theory of pleasure and pain is that they accommodate pains (and pleasures) where what is found painful or pleasant is an object with certain attributes (e.g. pain at one who suffers undeservedly, 1386b12f.), or a putative state of affairs (e.g. pain at undeserved suffering, 1386b9). It seems to me that the theories of pleasure from the ethical works struggle to meet this requirement.[39] In the ethical works, pleasure completes an activity, and arises from (or is identical with) (Gosling and Taylor 1982: ch. 11; Owen 1971/2) the unimpeded activity of a faculty in relation to its objects. What is thereby enjoyed is exercising that faculty on those objects. Pleasure seems always to be strictly speaking pleasure in an activity, for example eating/tasting the cream cake, even in those cases where it seems more natural to speak simply of enjoying the object—the cake. This view does not then seem able to accommodate the examples of emotional pleasures and pains above without distorting them. Pleasure at another's suffering (*ho epichairekakos* 1386b34–87a3) is not the same as enjoying *knowing* about his suffering. Pain at the success of an equal (*phthonos* 1387b23f.) is not the same as loathing *knowing* about the success of an equal (D. Frede 1996: 275–6). It seems difficult even to make this distinction on the accounts in the *Ethics*. They thus risk misidentifying what it is that is found pleasant or painful. Even though in the *Rhetoric's* account of many types of emotion, the thing at which pain is incurred is qualified by 'apparent' or some cognate expression, this cannot be plausibly taken to mean that pain is incurred at the mental *state* (i.e. at the state itself of having something appear to you) rather than at the putative *fact* (i.e. at that which is apparently the case).[40] It does not seem to me that the accounts of pleasure and pain from the ethical treatises can be easily reinterpreted so as to accommodate the kinds of pain under discussion here. Rather, it seems best to understand those accounts as being accounts, appropriate to their role in the ethical treatises, of enjoyment and loathing *of activities*, that is, in a subset of things in which pleasure and pain can be taken. Their purpose, I take it, is primarily to show that genuine happiness does after all involve pleasure (*NE* 1152b4–8, 1176a15–29), to make clear how character virtue and vice are connected with pleasure and pain (*NE* 1152b4–6), and to shed light on the use of pleasure and pain in educating the young to act correctly (*NE* 1172a16–26). It does not necessarily impugn these accounts to observe that they are not complete accounts of all pleasure and pain.

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[35] See D. Frede (1996: 275–60) for the one exception of which I am aware.

[36] For example, on Fortenbaugh's account, why the thought of a friend's success should cause (say) an unimpeded exercise of a faculty is not so obvious as not to require any explanation.

[37] See Ryle (1954: ch. 4) for worries about whether such a view could be correct.

[38] See 'and pain is the opposite' *Rhet.* I.11, 1369b35. *NE* 7.11, 1152b1 announces an account concerned with 'pleasure and pain', but what follows contains very little directly about pain; interestingly the account in *NE* 10 does not announce itself as an account of both pleasure and pain, but simply of pleasure (1372a16; although see *NE* 9.9, 1170a24f. for a possible forward reference to it as an account 'about pain'). Still, pain is discussed briefly at various points in ways that are taken to illuminate the nature of pleasure.

[39] Whether the arguments in *NE* 10 and in the common books (*NE* 7) are wholly consistent need not detain us here. For in both, pleasure is a matter of enjoying some activity, and pain some correlate *mutatis mutandis* of pleasure.

4. The account of pleasure in *Rhet.* 1.11

Pleasure and pain in Rhetoric *1.11*

The account of pleasure in the *Rhetoric* itself may fare better at providing an account of pleasure and pain at (what in the subject's view are) emotion-relevant circumstances. The account has not been widely discussed.[41] This is partly because it is often taken to have major deficiencies—J. C. B. Gosling and C. C. W. Taylor identify it as a process theory and a restoration theory, both heavily criticized by Aristotle in the ethical works with arguments widely taken to be successful against their targets. Accordingly, another reason for its neglect has been that it does not thus reflect, indeed is taken to be inconsistent with,

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[40] This holds even on a different view from that adopted here about the precise force of 'apparent' in these expressions; see above note 28.

[41] It gets a very brief treatment in Gosling and Taylor (1982: 196–9), of which barely half a page is given to exegesis of the relevant chapter of the *Rhetoric*. See now Rapp (2002).

Aristotle's mature views (it is classed by Gosling and Taylor as 'early Aristotle').[42] Furthermore, since it occurs within a section of the *Rhetoric* which provides the materials for enthymemes, materials which purport only to be 'reputable', it need not be taken even to reflect Aristotle's views at the time of writing.

It is far from obvious that the *caveat* offered by Aristotle at 1369b31f. (immediately before 1.11) should lead us to conclude that the materials of *Rhet.* 1.11 do not represent his own views. He is there concerned merely that readers not expect from his definitions a greater degree of exactness than is possible in a work of this character. But still, his account will not be completely vague—the definitions offered will be 'neither unilluminating nor yet meticulous' (μητε ἀσαφεις μητε ἀκριβεις). Surely it is over-cautious on this basis to deny that it is generally Aristotle's own views that are expressed in the 'materials for enthymemes' sections of the first book of the *Rhetoric,* and of the account of pleasure (and pain) in particular? Indeed, arguably a *caveat* of this kind only makes sense if he is giving his own view: it would be odd to strike such a cautionary note if Aristotle were merely recording the views of others.[43]

Still, even if *Rhetoric* 1.11 did not represent Aristotle's own views, this would not mean that it is not an interesting and important account of pleasure and pain. Neither would this make it untrue. So, I propose to look in detail at *Rhetoric* 1.11, tentatively assuming that it was genuinely proposed by Aristotle as the outline of a theory of pleasure and pain.

The account of pleasure (and pain) in Rhet. *1.11*

> Let us take it that pleasure is some motion of the soul, a massive and perceptible settling down into its proper nature, and pain the opposite. If that is what pleasure is like, it is

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[42] One of the reasons why this section is often taken this way is because of its relation to the views on pleasure found within Plato's *Philebus* and *Timaeus*. It seems correct to take the latter views as Aristotle's targets in his criticisms in the ethical works of previous accounts of pleasure. As will be seen below, I think the *Rhetoric* account is importantly different from these Platonic accounts, although it seems as though Aristotle is keen here (as in a number of other places in the *Rhetoric,* such as 1.10 where he comes close to endorsing something like *Republic*-style tripartition in the theory of motivation) to make his account *sound* amenable to the Platonist. Passages of this kind are suggestive of an interesting dialectic with Platonists. They certainly suggest that adherents to Platonic thought must have been an important section of the readership for the work.

[43] *Pace* Gosling and Taylor (1982: 197–8). The point has been widely made that some views set out in the *Rhetoric* must be taken by Aristotle to be correct and not merely plausible. In particular, this must apply to his accounts of the emotions since the orator is intended to use them not merely for speaking convincingly about the emotions but for actually arousing them in his audience. See Cooper (1996a) 240–1, D. Frede (1996) 259–60, Striker (1996) 286, Sihvola (1996) 53–4. Still, this argument does not apply to the treatment of pleasure and the pleasant in *Rhet.* I.11. They are intended not to enable the orator to produce pleasure or pain in anyone else, but primarily to enable the orator to speak convincingly about the motives of others (1369b15–31).

> evident that what produces the aforementioned condition is pleasant, what destroys it or produces the contrary settling down is painful. Necessarily, therefore, it is pleasant...
>
> 1. in general, to come into the natural state (especially whenever things coming about in accordance with it have regained their own nature).
> 2. Likewise, habits. For that which has become habitual is already becoming as though it were natural; in fact, habit is something like nature, for the distance between 'often' and 'always' is not great, and nature belongs to what is always, habit to what is often.
> 3. That which is not forced is also pleasant, for force is contrary to nature. That is why what is necessary is painful, and it has been rightly said,
>
> 'For every necessitated act is bitter.'
>
> Application, effort, and strain are also painful, for these involve necessity and force, unless they are habituated; for then habit makes them pleasant. Their opposites are pleasant. Hence relaxation, idleness, freedom from care, amusements, leisure, and sleep are among pleasant things, because none of these is done out of necessity.
>
> Whatever is an object of appetite is pleasant; for appetite is a desire for the pleasant. (1369b33–70a18)

On the face of it, the opening definition itself has clear scope for accommodating pleasures that are taken *at* something, and involve representing that thing in a particular way—that is, just what is required for Aristotelian emotions. For one part of the definition has it that pleasure is a 'motion of the soul', or an 'event in the soul' (b33f.)[44] and this seems immediately to offer the possibility that representational states directed upon pleasure's objects could be among such 'motions' or 'events'.

The restoration of nature view

Still, this may be too quick. There is an interpretation of these lines on which this possibility does not exist. On this interpretation, all pleasure is simply the restoration of a thing's nature, and things that are pleasant are simply those that bring about a process of this kind. 1369b33ff. is taken, on this view, more or less as a recapitulation of part of the account of pleasures set out in Plato's *Philebus* 31b–36c. Thus, the motion of the soul at b33f. is nothing more than the perception implied by *'athroan kai aisthêtên'* at b34. Pleasure is a veridically perceived restoration of the subject's naturally harmonious condition,[45] where this is sufficiently massive (*'athroan'*) to be perceptible (*'aisthêtên'*), that is, to cause the relevant perceptual motion of the soul.

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[44] How we should understand *kinêsis* here will be discussed below.

[45] It seems unavoidable to use some such locution to make clear that the 'proper nature' is being used to convey some sense in which the resulting condition is evaluated as 'naturally good' or 'good for the subject in respect of their nature'. There is otherwise a difficulty over squaring the phrase with 1370a8, where 'nature' is said to belong to 'what is constant' (*tou aei*). If someone's nature is constant, they cannot possibly settle into it because cannot *fail to be in it* in the first place.

Undeniably some elements in 1.11 seem to fit this view. What is pleasant is defined (1370a1–3) apparently without any reference to how the pleasant object is viewed, but simply in terms of its causal relations (*'poiêtikon'*, *'phthartikon'*) to the states and processes that constitute pleasure. And what Aristotle labels as his best examples (*'malista'* a4) of pleasant things seems to bear this out:

> especially whenever things coming about in accordance with it have regained their own nature. (1370a4–5)

These are most plausibly understood as cases of the restoration of something's naturally best condition after a naturally occurring depletion—that is, things like drinking when thirsty and eating when hungry.[46] The pleasure involved seems to arise regardless of how the subject conceives of what is happening.

However, this cannot, I think, be Aristotle's whole understanding of pleasure. Thus, despite the fact that he does appear to start from pleasures related to a human's natural functions, and an account that seems completely focused on pleasure of this kind, he quickly branches out towards recognising as pleasant things that do not produce a restoration of the subject's nature at all. On closer examination, we will see that the possibility of pleasure in this wider set of cases seems to be built into the definition of pleasure itself.

Problems with a 'restoration of nature' view

The definition itself would be an odd construction if all pleasure were natural restoration perceived in the soul, for the first part ('some kind of motion of the soul' b33f.) would be almost superfluous if it simply referred to the perception that is more-or-less implied by 'massive and perceptible' at b34. More probably, Aristotle intends to suggest that there is something else going on in the soul beyond an awareness of the restoration.

In fact, we see just this almost immediately in Aristotle's examples of pleasant things. He presents three categories of pleasant things as though their pleasantness simply followed as a matter of necessity from the definitions of pleasure and the pleasant.[47] In fact, only the pleasantness of the first can be inferred from the preceding definitions—understood exactly as they stand.[48] Indeed, by the definitions of pleasure and the pleasant he has just offered, habits and habitual activities are not pleasant. They perhaps bring about the restoration of a habitual condition. And this habitual condition may be 'just like', 'similar to', or 'close to' a thing's proper nature,[49] but notwithstanding all that, Aristotle seems to understand here that habit is not the same as nature. So, habits bring about the restoration of *something like* a thing's proper nature. Thus, the best we can conclude would be that they bring about *something like pleasure*, not pleasure itself, and that they are *something like pleasant*, not actually pleasant. Likewise, even if one allowed (implausibly) that when someone or something is forced against its will to do something, this goes against their nature, it does not follow that all cases in which such compulsion is absent must involve 'the restoration of a thing's proper nature', as their pleasantness would require. The second and third categories in Aristotle's trio of pleasant things are better understood not as inferences from the initial definitions—strictly understood (as in the 'restoration of nature' view)—but as his way of showing how his opening definitions need to be understood more flexibly, of indicating how they are to be extended eventually to cover the full range of pleasant things that lies ahead in the rest of *Rhetoric* 1.11. What I believe Aristotle thinks about habits and about things that are unforced is that they put us in a condition in which we *take ourselves*, sometimes mistakenly, to be experiencing a restoration of our proper nature. The habitual and the unforced give rise to pleasure because they give rise to an experience that shares the relevant features with the veridical experience of a restoration of the subject's proper nature. The relevant features have to do with the *contents* of the experience.

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[46] *'ta kat'autên gignomena'* (a5) is here understood to refer to depletions of the body, such as hunger and thirst, that are themselves the product of the body's natural activity.

[47] 'Necessarily, therefore, it is pleasant...', 1370a3. It is not clear how much of what follows is within the scope of this inference. The way the translation is set out above records my view, based on two chief considerations. First, *'te'* (a3) is most plausibly picked up by the *'kai'* at a5 (and also at a9) not the one at a4. Secondly, if what was being inferred were only that going into the natural condition is pleasant, this would add nothing to what had just been asserted.

Indeed, this point is reinforced by some of Aristotle's other examples of pleasant things. As Aristotle's account of things pleasant progresses, his account leans more and more towards things that are pleasant because of the way that they relate to what people believe. We might recall that his purpose in setting out what people find pleasant is as part of helping the forensic orator to make (or refute) claims about a defendant's motives for wrongdoing.[50] So, it is no surprise to find among Aristotle's list of what is pleasant things that are only pleasant because we believe them to be so, or because we come to view them in a certain way. His examples include winning (1370b32ff.), honour, and good reputation (1371a8ff.), being loved (1371a18f.), being admired (1371a21f.), and even flattery (1371a22ff)! In two of these cases, winning and flattery, an

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Indeed, so close is it to the preceding formulation that it scarcely makes sense to see it as an *inference* from what preceded at all.

[48] Even here, what follows, strictly speaking, is that coming into the natural state is a case of *pleasure*, not of something *pleasant*.

[49] *'hôsper'* (a6), *'homoion'* (a7), *'engus'* (a7).

[50] This is clear both from how 1.11 is introduced beforehand, and how it is summarized afterwards: *Rhetoric* 1.10, 1368b1–5; b25–32; 1369b15–31; 1.12, 1372a4–5.

inference is explicitly made that is hard to account for without supposing that Aristotle understood his account of pleasure to have a representational component (i.e. without supposing that the settling into one's proper nature mentioned in the definition of pleasure specifies *how things are represented to be* by the subject, whether or not this is how things actually are). The inference is clearest in the case of flattery.

> Also being flattered and the flatterer are pleasant things. For the flatterer is a seeming admirer and a seeming friend. (1371a22–4)

The inference is from the pleasantness of something to the pleasantness of an apparent case of that thing. The fact that the same kind of inference had been made at 1370b32–4 indicates that Aristotle takes it to be legitimate for pleasant things generally. This, it seems to me, is deeply problematic on 'straight' non-representational readings of his definition of pleasure here in *Rhetoric* 1.11, and the corresponding definition of the pleasant. For, on these readings, Aristotle thinks that pleasure is simply some process in the subject (attaining their proper nature), and pleasantness is being productive of this. But if that is so, then it is simply a fallacy to infer from something's being pleasant that an apparent case of that thing will be productive of the same result, especially when (as with flattery) there is a strong possibility that appearances are misleading. There is nothing in the nature of pleasure or the pleasant, on a non-representational view of these, that helps explain why such inferences are acceptable (as clearly Aristotle takes them to be).

By contrast, on a 'representational' understanding of either pleasure or pleasantness, the grounds for the inference are much easier to supply. On a representational view of pleasantness, a thing's being pleasant will be a matter of its being *represented* as having certain pleasure-producing features. If cases of being flattered involve their being (mistakenly or otherwise) taken for cases of being loved, and being loved is understood to have the relevant pleasure-producing features (i.e. it is taken to be pleasant, 1371a17–21), then it is obvious how flattery comes to be pleasant. It is rational to conclude in each case that here is something with the relevant pleasure-producing features, namely, here is something pleasant.

Likewise, a representational view of pleasure would be the view that pleasure itself involves, perhaps amongst other things, representational contents as of experiencing the effects of something pleasant. It is easy to see how a state or process with those representational characteristics would be likely to be brought about by the subject's believing that he is on the receiving end of something pleasant. So, the flattered person takes himself to be loved or befriended (1371a24) and presumably takes this to be a pleasant thing for him. He thus sees himself as enjoying the beneficial effects of something pleasant. This is of course not the same as feeling pleasure at that thing, but on the representational view, it is already to have in place precisely the kind of basis on which one might expect to come to have an experience involving representations as of experiencing the effects of something pleasant. That is, to see something as pleasant is already to be on the path to feeling pleasure at it. The contents of the former ('that is pleasant') implies or suggests the contents of the latter ('this—its effect—is pleasure').

Representational views of pleasure thus make it natural to suppose that a belief in something's pleasantness will give rise to pleasure at it. Hence, there will be cases where it is sufficient for something's being pleasant that it is believed to be pleasant. But this does not either imply or suggest a fully representational view of pleasantness. There may be things whose pleasantness is derived from their being believed to be pleasant. But this is not true of all pleasant things. There are things that are pleasant to infants and beasts, and things that are pleasant in ways that do not seem to depend in any important way on their being represented in any particular way by the subject. The pleasantness of a gentle massage or a warm bed might be good examples.

Whatever the compatibility of these views with Aristotle's initial definition of pleasure and pleasantness at 1369b33ff., it is clear that through most of *Rhet.* 1.11, as he catalogues the things that are pleasant, he must have in mind a view of pleasure involving representational content. We shall see, moreover, that this content is best understood as including the object of pleasure.

Now, if this interpretation is correct, his view of pleasure will be precisely what is required for his view of emotions in Book 2. This picture is further corroborated by the occurrence in 1.11 of some of the key locutions used in characterizing the pleasures and pains involved in emotions in 2.1–11. Thus, 'lovers are constantly glad about [*peri* + genitive] the beloved' (1370b20) and at the onset of love 'pain arises at [dative] the [lover's] absence' (b24), and while grief involves a mixture of pain and pleasure, 'the pain is at [*epi* + dative] the fact that they are not there' (1370b26). There is no reason to think these are special cases. It seems reasonable to think that Aristotle would have recognized that in many cases for something to be pleasant in a particular way is just for it to be such as to give rise to pleasure *at that thing characterized that way.* This view of at least some pleasures has again much in common with the position set out in the *Philebus* where the 'opinions' associated with pleasures or pains 'fill up' the pleasures and pains with their own condition.[51]

Aristotle's 'contents of experience' view of pleasure in Rhet. *1.11*

The evidence surveyed suggests the rejection of the 'restoration of nature' interpretation in favour of an interpretation in which Aristotle understands pleasure in terms of the contents of pleasure experiences. On this interpretation, 1369b33ff. might be paraphrased as follows:

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[51] *Philebus* 42a7–9.

> Let us take it that pleasure is some motion of the soul [i.e. some representational state] as of a massive and perceptible settling into one's proper nature.[52]

Some such understanding seems to be necessary to accommodate even some of these very first items in Aristotle's list of pleasant things—the pleasantness of habits, for example. The same will apply, as we have seen, to many more items listed as pleasant in *Rhetoric* 1.11.[53]

The key interpretative point is that 'motion of the soul' at 1369b33f. is unlikely merely to express essentially the same point as '*aisthêtên*' at b34: the requirement that the restoration of the natural condition be sufficiently massive to be perceived. It is more likely to indicate something more complex. I speculated above that the pleasantness of habits and what is unforced could be accommodated by supposing that the motion of the soul had representational content *as of* a settling into the natural condition. But merely for pleasure (and, by implication, pain) to be representational in *this* way is insufficient to accommodate the kind of representational pleasure and pain required for emotions. These require the representational content to be not just of the state of the subject himself, but of the object or circumstances found pleasant. We saw earlier that Aristotelian emotions involve representational pleasure and pain *at the grounds for the emotion*, which might focus centrally on *some object* that is the emotion's *target*. However, it becomes clear shortly after the initial definition of pleasure that Aristotle *does* indeed see the representational content involved in pleasure as including pleasure's objects. Whereas in the initial definition of pleasure, what was 'perceptible' (1369b34) was the settling into the subject's proper nature, by 1370a27–32, it is clear that Aristotle takes the kind of perception (or quasi-perception) involved in pleasure to include perception of pleasure's object—the point in this passage being to establish that this can happen through memory and anticipation because of the involvement of *phantasia* in these states. The crucial point for our purposes is to notice that Aristotle is content to allow that the representational states involved in pleasure cannot have only the state of the subject as their contents, but the pleasant objects too.

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[52] The need for a paraphrase raises a puzzle about why—if this was Aristotle's view—he did not express it more clearly. Practically any interpretation of his definition faces the challenge of making it consistent with the rest of the chapter. The most obvious interpretation of each part of 1.11 renders Aristotle's definitions of pleasure and pleasant inconsistent with his list of things recognized as pleasant. The unclarity, on our interpretation, of his initial definition is excused somewhat by Aristotle's warning at 1369b31f. against expecting these definitions to be too exact, and by his practical purpose in this chapter. He may also have seen the complexity involved in providing an adequate account of pleasure (see D. Frede 1993: xliv), and thought it easier to provide a definition that only really applies straightforwardly to bodily pleasures, together with some gestures towards how it might be expanded to cover the wider range of pleasures that he recognizes.

[53] We need not, however, attribute to Aristotle the view that pleasure consists *solely* in the representational contents of experience having certain features. (Nor, indeed, is Aristotle committed to such a view by the range of things he recognizes as pleasant.) For example, the possibility is left open that Aristotle might have thought, as some others have, that the representational contents of a motion of the soul could not alone properly account for the pleasurable 'feel' of pleasure.

We have argued that in *Rhet.* 1.11 Aristotle sees pleasure and pain as representational states, with representational contents of a kind compatible with what is required by his account, in *Rhet.* 2.1–11, of the emotions as pleasures and pains. Still, important questions remain about the kind of 'motion of the soul' that pleasure or pain involves: specifically, what kind of stance is taken towards its representational content?

We start in seemingly unpromising territory, the indefinite adjective 'some' (Gk: *'tina'*) from the first part of his definition of pleasure: *'kinêsin tina tês psuchês'* ('some motion of the soul', b33f.). Disambiguating this expression touches on an important issue for Aristotle's understanding both of pleasure and pain, and—if the principal claims of this chapter are upheld—of emotions. Here are four possible ways to understand this phrase.

1. (reading *'tina'* (b33) as 'some [particular] kind or other') Aristotle recognizes that there will be some particular kind of motion of the soul that all pleasure involves, but he here maintains his neutrality over which of various competing accounts might be correct. We might paraphrase as follows, '[whatever precise theory of pleasure is correct,] it is *some kind of* motion of the soul'.

2. (reading *'tina'* (b33) as 'a certain [particular kind of]') Aristotle recognizes that all pleasure involves some particular kind of motion of the soul, but he refrains in this context from offering a more detailed characterization.

3. (reading *'tina'* (b33) as *alienans,* and *'kinêsin'* as meaning change—thus: 'a change of a kind') On this reading, Aristotle *is* here characterizing (or beginning to characterize), albeit rather sketchily, the kind of motion of the soul that pleasure involves. He characterizes it as 'a change—sort of' in the soul, that is, a *pseudo*-change or a *quasi*-change. Perhaps he has in mind that pleasure is the *energeia* of some part in its best condition. Accordingly, *'tina'* signals that the state of pleasure is not strictly speaking a *kinêsis* in the sense discussed in, for example, *De Anima* 2.5.[54]

4. 'Some motion' is deliberately an indefinite phrase, since, even on the most precise understanding of them, pleasures can involve various kinds of motion. On this view, a correct definition of pleasure *could not* be more precise than this. Although the motions of the soul that are involved in pleasure must meet certain

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[54] See Burnyeat (2002), Heinaman (2007). The point that pleasure is strictly speaking not a *kinêsis*, need not be denied on the other readings. There is nothing in the context to indicate that *'kinêsin'* bears any particularly technical sense.

conditions (e.g. that they have certain kinds of representational content), still pleasure is, on this view, not a matter of being *some particular kind of motion* of the soul. Rather, any kind of motion of the soul (or any of a number of different kinds of motion) can constitute a pleasure, so long as those other conditions are met.

All of these seem plausible options as a reading of Aristotle's intended meaning here.

The 'activity view' and the 'features view'

The most significant difference between these interpretations concerns whether pleasure (or being pleased) is a kind of thing that we do, or whether it is a feature that may be possessed by our doing of something else. All of (1), (2), and (3) attribute to Aristotle the view that pleasure is something the soul does (possibly meaning something the animal does in virtue of being ensouled), correlative with believing and perceiving. On this view, it would be a proper task for the student of nature to establish what exactly this activity is, the nature of its objects, and perhaps also the part of the body with which it is done. Call this the 'activity view'. By contrast, (4) attributes to Aristotle the view that pleasure happens when the soul does something *else* in such a way as to constitute pleasure. On this view, sensations, thoughts, beliefs, desires, and perceptions might all constitute pleasures if their occurrence has certain features. Call this the 'features view'. The most obvious feature would be that their represented contents in some way include the effects of some pleasant object, and perhaps the pleasant object itself.

Exegetical reasons (from elsewhere in Aristotle) for preferring the features view

There does not seem to be any obvious evidence in the immediate context in the *Rhetoric* on the basis of which to adjudicate between these readings. I briefly suggest two considerations that tell somewhat in favour of the 'features view'.

First, the features view seems more easily compatible with views in the ethical treatises. In particular, it seems easier to accommodate on this view the insight that enjoying doing something is not something over and beyond doing that thing.[55] It is an attribute of one's doing it, or some feature of the manner in which it is done.

Secondly, the features view sits well with the brief discussion of pleasure and pain in *De An.* 3.7, 431a8–14. There it seems clear that there is no separate faculty of pleasure or pain, they are exercises of the perceptual faculty. Conceivably in this passage from the *De An.*, Aristotle is only concerned with bodily pleasure and pain, and it will be true of all such cases that they involve perception—bodily sensation, in fact. The bodily sensations that are pains are those where the perceptual system is activated by a painful object. Such an activation of sensory capacity has some key features—features, it seems, of its objects and how they are represented—that make it a case of pain. It looks as though the features view is how Aristotle is thinking of pain in this passage in the *De Anima*, and this lends support to attributing to him a similar view in the *Rhetoric*.

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[55] See *NE* 1153a7–17.

Tentatively, then, the features view will be adopted in considering the philosophical merits of what I have proposed is Aristotle's view: that emotions are pleasures and pains. In summary, making sense of the definitions of pleasure at the start of *Rhetoric* 1.11 is tricky. Doubtless, what Aristotle provides is adequate for the purpose of the treatise, but it is frustrating to have little more than gestures towards how the whole account could be understood consistently. Nevertheless, the remainder of that chapter gives a basis for affirming confidently that Aristotle did here understand pleasure as involving the kind of representational contents required for his account of the emotions in *Rhetoric* 2.1–11, that is, for upholding both our claim 1 and claim 2.

5. The philosophical merits of Aristotle's theory of emotions

Philosophical advantages of understanding the emotions as pleasures and pains

It is beyond the scope of the present project to evaluate fully the merits of the view of the emotions that emerges from my treatment of Aristotle's text. Nevertheless, it is worth indicating some important merits possessed by an account of emotions in which they are understood as pleasures and pains.

Three principal advantages possessed by an understanding of emotions as pleasures and pains are (1) a kind of parsimony in our explanation of mental phenomena, (2) a unity between various aspects of emotional experience, and (3) that (at least on the features view of pleasure and pain) his theory will be compatible with whatever turns out to be the correct explanation of recalcitrant emotions.

The parsimony advantage can be initially canvassed as follows. The following seem to be three kinds of mental phenomena:

(1) Pleasant and painful bodily sensations
(2) Pain and pleasure at things being thus and so
(3) Emotions

It obviously simplifies the task of explaining what these things are if the things in (3) are all or part of what falls within (2). Likewise, the task is simplified still further if the resources for the explanation of the things in (2) are wholly or largely available from the explanation of the things in (1). Seeing emotions as pains and pleasures thus immediately simplifies an explanatory task in psychology. On the 'features view' of pleasure and pain one might go further and suggest that the explanation of both emotions and (if distinct from emotions) of pains/pleasures at things being thus and so will require no more than the various attitudes (belief, desire, judgement, etc.) towards represented content that an account of the mind is likely to require *anyway*, plus an account of what makes such attitudes painful or pleasant.[56] This gives this view an explanatory advantage over views of emotions as *sui generis* states.[57] For on such views, emotions represent an addition to the tally of explanatory tools required for an adequate psychology.

The unity issue may be illustrated as follows.

	Judging that something bad will happen
+	Having an unpleasant sensation
+	Having a desire to run away
+	Having a certain body temperature
≠	Having the emotion of fear.

And this lack of unity does not seem to be alleviated by supposing that the unpleasant sensation was *caused* by judging that something bad will happen. In general, the requirement is that the various elements of an emotion—the cognitions and consequent rational and inferential relations, the phenomenology, associated motivations, and the physiological changes involved—should possess the right kind of unity. If emotions are pleasures and pains, and if the latter are best understood as features possessed by other kinds of mental phenomena (i.e. they are painful sensations, or pleasurable thoughts, painful imaginings, pleasurable memories), then the unity is easy to explain.

> Pitying Jessica, on this account, might be the painful judgement that she is suffering undeservedly (where what is painful about the judgement is its object: that she is suffering undeservedly).

The fact that this is a judgement means (e.g.) that it is rational if the subject has good evidence that Jessica is suffering undeservedly, and that pity for her should cease if they knew that her suffering had ceased, or was deserved. The fact that the judgement is painful accounts for its phenomenal character. But additionally, for the judgement to be genuinely painful probably requires the deployment of some specific bodily apparatus in the way the judgement is instantiated.[58] The fact that Jessica's undeserved suffering is found painful readily explains why pity of this kind constitutes a motivation to bring it about that she not suffer undeservedly, that is, to alleviate her suffering. A view of emotions as pleasures and pains thus seems to offer considerable strengths in terms of parsimony in psychology, and in meeting a unity requirement for emotional states that rival accounts may find harder to meet.

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[56] This adds a philosophical advantage to the view canvassed above that for Aristotle the *genus* of emotions is pleasure or pain.

[57] For example Goldie (2000), Whiting (2006).

One thing that an account of emotions in terms of pain and pleasure does not do is answer the question 'what kind of stance towards their represented content is involved in emotions?' For pains and pleasures seem to come in various shapes and sizes involving a variety of different stances toward the content represented. As a consequence, they vary as to the logical and inferential relations in which they stand to other mental states. Feeling pain at the breakdown of a friendship whilst denying that this friendship has broken down is irrational. Feeling pain in my foot whilst denying that I have a foot—so-called 'phantom limb pain' felt by some amputees—is not irrational. The difference between these two cases seems best explained as the former being a painful belief or judgement and the latter being a painful sensation. There are puzzles that arise with some emotions when they persist in the face of conflicting better knowledge. Thus, feeling afraid of the spider I know not to be fearsome is irrational; but it is not as irrational as simultaneously affirming and denying that the spider is fearsome. The puzzle over how to characterize the stance involved in such emotions towards the content represented is not solved by supposing fear to involve pain. But it is clear that this view of emotions will be compatible with whatever the correct characterization of that stance turns out to be.

6. Conclusion

Aristotle insists on two key features in his account of the passions. One is that they play a role (or are capable of playing a role) in verdict formation. The other is that they involve pleasure and pain. I have focused here on the latter and argued for the view that the involvement of pleasure or pain is essential to Aristotelian emotions, and that this view does not involve him in strong or implausible claims about pleasure or pain being the *genus* of any or all passions. With these qualifications, his position is that the emotions are pleasures and pains at certain supposed states of affairs, typically focused on some object. This claim puts pressure on his understanding of pleasure and pain, since it must be the case that there *are* genuine pleasures and pains of the right kind to be involved in the passions. This requires a representational theory of pleasure and pain, not merely one specified in terms of physiological process. The representational contents of the state should include the object at which pleasure or pain is experienced, as well as how the subject is affected by the pleasantness or painfulness of the object.

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[58] Sensing (visually) that my foot is painful is not the same as feeling pain in my foot, even though both are sensory perceptions as of a painful object. Apprehending the object in a pain-involving way may typically implicate particular parts of the body in the apprehension. This is so even on an entirely representational account of pain: having a sensation with *exactly that* content involves the proprio-perceptual system, or the eyes and visual system, or the nose and olfactory system, etc.

I have recorded a number of reservations about Aristotle's account. It is not completely clear how every one of the individual emotion types fits his overall account, and we have seen that perhaps, in the end, some cannot be made to fit it. Perhaps the greatest frustration with his account is that he does not specify, at least not to the level of precision we might hope for, the stance towards their represented content that emotions involve.

As such, his account in *Rhet.* 2.1–11 is imperfect. Nevertheless, these reservations should not blind us to the considerable merits and interest of what may not improperly be called Aristotle's theory of the emotions.

3

Desire in Action: Aristotle's Move

David Charles

1. Introduction

In *De Anima* 3.10, 433b13ff Aristotle says that desire moves the animal. However, his claim is difficult to interpret (partly) because he takes the phenomenon described to be completely unproblematic. He writes:

> The instrument by which desire moves the animal is a bodily one: this is why it must be investigated among the functions common to body and soul... (433b19–20)

His remark strikes post-Cartesian interpreters as disappointing and mysterious. From their viewpoint, he fails even to spot the basic philosophical question: how can desire (a psychological phenomenon) move the animal's body? Nor is their sense of disappointment diminished by what follows:

> ... for now, to put the matter briefly, that which moves instrumentally is where a beginning and end coincide, as in a ball and socket joint: here the convex (the ball) and the concave (the socket) are respectively the end and beginning of movement; this is why one is at rest and the other is in motion. They are spatially inseparable but differ in account. For all movement consists in pulling and pushing. This is why it is necessary (as in a wheel) that something remains at rest and from it movement is initiated... (433b21–6)

For Aristotle, the instrument by which desire moves the body does so by pushing and pulling. But his observation only deepens the mystery: how can desire 'use an instrument' which must have weight and magnitude, if it is to push and pull? How can it be spatially adjacent (as in a hinge joint) to the beginning of the movement of the body? Aristotle does not address, let alone answer, these questions. While he notes that the instrument must be investigated 'among the functions common to the body and the soul', he does not clarify what such functions are. Nor does he spell out what is involved in desire doing something with 'an instrument'. We need to look elsewhere for his views on these issues.

In this chapter I shall consider first Aristotle's account of the interconnection between 'passions of the soul' and states of the body in *De An.* 1.1. This discussion, in my view, provides the resources to understand central aspects of his account of desire and of 'functions common to the body and the soul'. On this basis, I shall investigate his description of how the animal is moved in *De Motu Animalium* and finally comment on his talk of 'instruments' in this area. While a full account of these issues lies beyond the scope of this essay, my aim is to sketch an outline of Aristotle's characterization of (i) desire, (ii) 'functions common to body and soul', and, (iii) how these lead the agent to move his (or her) body.

Aristotle's view on these issues is, or so I shall argue, a distinctive one. Indeed, it seems unsatisfactory to contemporary interpreters precisely because it is not one of the familiar options of post-Cartesian philosophy (dualism, materialism, functionalism, or spiritualism). It should be seen rather as offering a radical alternative to these traditional accounts, challenging the basic assumptions that drive them.

Post-Cartesian theories normally make two common assumptions:

[1]* There is a purely psychological feature or process involved in desiring (or a purely psychological description), such as desiring (or aiming at) revenge.

[2]* All relevant processes and features essentially involved in desiring are either purely psychological or purely physical or a combination of the two.

These assumptions have been taken for granted in the exegetical debates of the past two decades (and more) about *De Anima*. Thus, broadly materialist interpreters represent Aristotle's account of desire as follows:

[1] Desire is to be defined as the psychological process it is without reference to any physical phenomena (in purely psychological terms).

[2] Desire is realized in (or constituted by/or supervenes on) a particular process of a physical/material type.

[3] The relevant type of physical/material process can be defined without reference to any psychological state or description.

If there were a 'spiritualist' interpretation, it would represent Aristotle as holding that:

[1] Desire is to be defined as the psychological process it is without reference to any physical phenomena (in purely psychological terms).

[2] Desire is not realized in any physical process at all (although it may require the presence of certain physical necessary conditions).

[3] Aristotle did not require desire to be realized in any physical process because he understood the relevant matter as primitively endowed with capacities for ungrounded psychological activity.[1]

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[1] Dualists would present desire as the purely psychological efficient cause of the material change involved in action. They would also see desire as the manifestation of a capacity of a separate substance: the dualist's soul. It moves the body by (somehow) interacting with the body (e.g. in the pineal gland).

Both sets of interpreters, so understood, explicitly accept [1] (which is equivalent to [1]* above) and tacitly assume [2]* on their journeys to their fundamentally opposed conclusions. Aristotle, I shall argue, did not accept either of these shared assumptions. Indeed, his position calls into question the Cartesian map which most current philosophers and interpreters use to navigate in this area. We have to recover his very different vantage point before we can see how his apparently disappointing account of how desire moves the body constitutes an intelligible alternative to contemporary (twentieth–twenty-first century) orthodoxies.

2. *De Anima* 1.1: fear and anger: an overview

Anger and fear, as I have argued in more detail elsewhere, are treated by Aristotle as inseparable in definition as well as in existence from states of the body. More specifically, the type of desire for revenge which defines anger cannot be defined without reference to certain physiological processes (boiling of the blood). The latter play a role in determining the type of desire that is present in anger. Desire of this type is an inextricably and essentially psychophysical process. It is a boiling-of-the-blood-type of desire for revenge.[2]

The type of desire for revenge which the angry experience resists decomposition into distinct physical and psychological components. As Aristotle comments:

> We have said that the affections of the soul are inseparable from the physical matter of living beings in the way in which anger and fear are inseparable and not in the way in which line and plane are. (403b17–19)

In this passage, he distinguishes these cases in terms of distinct types of separability:

> anger and fear: they are existentially inseparable and inseparable in definition from perceptual matter
>
> mathematical objects: they are existentially inseparable from but separable in definition from perceptual matter

In the latter case, the mathematician initially abstracts and then separates his objects from all perceptual matter in thought and no error arises (in his purely mathematical reasoning) when he does so (see also *Meta.* 13.3, 1078a17: *Phys.* 2.1, 193b34–5.) By contrast, in the case of anger,

[A] The psychological features that are essential to being angry (that is, desiring revenge) are inseparable in definition from the processes with physical properties to which they belong: the relevant features are inextricably psychophysical features.

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[2] For a fuller statement and defence of this view, see Charles (2009c).

[B] The psychophysical features (specified in [A]) are essential to the identity of the processes to which they belong: the processes to which the psychophysical features belong are essentially psychophysical processes.

[C] There is no other process (other than the one specified in [B]) which is essential to being angry.

Aristotle produces some considerations in favour of these claims in *De An.* 1.1. In favour of [A] he argues as follows: one who grasps what it is to be angry must know that it involves certain specific bodily states; otherwise they will go wrong in their account of when one gets angry/what anger is. More specifically: he suggests that the presence of some bodily state is necessary if anger and fear are to occur (403a19–20).

> Sometimes one is not stimulated or made afraid by great external misfortunes [i.e.: when the body is not affected].

Next, he claims that such bodily states are an essential part of the explanation of when one is angry or afraid. For sometimes (as he notes) one is moved to anger by small or insignificant events, when the body is stirred up (*orgą*) and is in the type of condition one is in when angry (403a20–2). Sometimes, even when nothing frightening happens, one is still afraid (in the emotional states of the person who is afraid).[3] In the latter case, presumably, one experiences fear because of the presence of some internal bodily state, even in the absence of an external cause (403a23–4).

What do these considerations show? In the last two examples, the body's state is an important part of what accounts for the person's being angry (or afraid). Omit reference to it and one fails to state the conditions under which someone is (e.g.) angry. The first example establishes that the presence of some bodily state or other is necessary if one is to be angry. Indeed, its absence explains why one is not angry in certain situations. If one assumes (as Aristotle seems to) that the type of bodily state is the same in all three examples, being angry requires the presence of one specific type of bodily state whose presence (partially) explains its onset.

From these considerations Aristotle concludes:

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[3] I take this sentence as providing a further proof of the claim made at 403a18–19: the body suffers at the same time as the *pathe* of the soul (just listed) occur. That is, '*touto*' in 403a23 refers back to the claim in 403a18–19 as further evidence (along with the claims made in 403a19–21). It seems implausible to take this sentence as making clear the quite different situation mentioned in the previous sentence: 'being moved by small occurrences'.

> It is clear that the emotions are enmattered formulae and so their definitions will be of the following form: to be angry is a process of this type of body or part or capacity of such a body caused in this way for the sake of such and such a goal. (403a24–7)

This conclusion is spelled out more fully in his next remarks:

> To be angry is a given type of process, the boiling of the blood around the heart for the sake of revenge. (403a31)

Aristotle's conclusion seems to be, in line with [B] above, that the relevant type of desire is inseparable in definition from (and not abstractable from) the boiling of the blood. So understood, the type of desire for revenge which defines anger is a boiling-of-the-blood-type of desire for revenge. Anger is essentially enmattered because its form is an enmattered form: one which is to be understood as essentially enmattered in this type of physical process.

Armed with this understanding of anger, Aristotle further claims that

> No one considers the properties of matter which are inseparable [from this type of body/matter] not that is as properties separable [from this type of body/matter] but the physicist considers all the deeds and properties of this type of body and matter of this type.... (403b10–12)

The physicist, unlike the mathematician, studies the inseparable properties of this type of body as inseparable properties of this type of body, designed to play the role they do in this type of matter. If so, in studying the type of boiling of the blood involved in being angry, the physicist will study precisely that: the type of boiling of the blood whose goal is revenge. He is not concerned with a purely physical description of this type of blood boiling, which does not refer to the specific goals of the organism in question. In his view, there is no other process essentially involved in being angry other than the type of boiling of the blood which is directed towards revenge. The only process at issue is: boiling of blood for the sake of revenge.

Three points may help to clarify Aristotle's thought on this important issue.

[1] In *Physics* B. 2, Aristotle understands physical form (the type of form the physicist studies) on the model of the snub: concavity in the nose (194a5–8). Here, he claims that one cannot define the form correctly in terms of concavity, taken as the form of the nose. For to define the type of concavity of which we speak we have to refer to concavity-of-the-nose. (For more detail on this: see *Soph. El.* 181b36ff where the snub is said not to be a concave nose [concavity in the nose] but rather concavity-of-the-nose in the nose; *Meta.* 1064a23ff where the phrase 'of-the-nose' is part of the *logos* of the snub). Reference to the nose is required to make determinate the type of concavity at issue. It might be described as the determinant that specifies the determinate type of concavity which snubness is. We begin with a determinable concavity, which is said in a general way (*koinē*: *Soph. El.* 181b35: compare the *koinos logos* discussed in *De*

An. 414b23f), but needs to be made determinate before it can appear in the relevant definition.

Physical forms, so understood, are to be contrasted with the types of form mathematics studies. The latter can be defined without reference to change (194a5) and so without reference to matter (194a13). Mathematical forms need to be instantiated (if they are to exist) and in some areas (such as optics or harmonics) are studied qua instantiated in matter (194a10–12). Nonetheless in all such cases mathematical forms are to be defined independently of all physical matter, even though they are realised in physical matter. Physical forms, by contrast, cannot be defined in this way: they have to be defined in terms which refer to change and so invoke matter. Such forms are enmattered not simply in the sense that they have to be enmattered in (e.g.) physical lines to exist. Rather, they are enmattered in a far stronger sense: they are forms-in-matter, forms that involve matter to be the forms they are.[4]

If anger and fear also instantiate physical forms, they (like the snub) must be defined as forms-in-matter. If so, to make specific the type of desire for revenge that is required one has to define it as a boiling-of-the-blood-type of desire for revenge. Otherwise, one will not be able to distinguish the type of desire for revenge that characterizes anger from the cold, calculating desire for revenge of the aged, who are not angry (see *Rhet.* 1390a15ff).

[2] In *De An.* 1.1, Aristotle introduces a dialectical definition of a house as a covering designed to prevent damage from wind and rain (403b4–6). But this does not yet mark out the type of covering a house is. Caves, awnings, tents, and well-trained branches are all coverings that are also designed to serve this purpose. What makes the relevant covering a house is that it is one which is made from matter such as bricks and wood. While there are other types of covering, a house is a specific type of matter-involving covering. Here, as in the case of the snub, being matter-involving functions as a determinant that specifies the determinate type of covering a house is.

[3] Aristotle compares various affections of the soul, including anger, with weaving in *De An.* 1.4, 408b11–13. This is an especially revealing example.

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[4] Aristotle discusses similar issues in *Meta.* 1036a25–32 and b5–8, where he also talks of some forms as enmatterred. While a full account of these passages lies outside the scope of the present Chapter, I take them as making the same strong claim about forms-in-matter as is to be found in *Phys.* 2. While forms so understood cannot be defined without reference to matter, this does not mean that they contain bits of matter in the way individual substances (such as Kallias or a snub nose do: 1037a32f). Indeed, enmattered forms (such as humanity) will differ from such kinds as man (1035b27ff) if the latter are themselves composed of the type of matter which individual substances contain (now seen in abstraction). For while forms (such as snubness) cannot be defined without reference to matter, it does not follow that they actually contain matter (or are composed out of matter) in the way Socrates' snub nose or the class of snub noses do (via the individuals that compose it). I am indebted to discussion of these *Metaphysics* passages with Alan Code and Michail Peramatzis. However, I take *Phys.* 2 as the immediate background for Aristotle's remarks in *De An.* 1.1.

For it seems intuitively clear that one cannot define what weaving is in purely psychological terms without reference to bodily movements. Indeed, as before:

[A] The psychological features that are essential to weaving (intentionally moving one's body to achieve a given goal) are inseparable in definition from the processes with physical properties to which they belong. They are inextricably psychophysical features.

[B] The psychophysical features (specified in [A]) are essential to the identity of the processes to which they belong: the processes to which the psychophysical features belong are essentially psychophysical processes (i.e. weaving).

[C] There is no other process (other than the one specified in [B]) which is essential to weaving.

If this is correct, being angry and being afraid are 'common to body and soul' in a particularly demanding way. The relevant processes are inseparable in definition into two separate components. There is not one (definitionally) separable purely formal process to which can be added another definitionally distinct physical (or bodily) process, both making (definitionally) separable but individually necessary contributions to the outcome. Rather, the relevant process is indissoluble in definition into two such components.[5] Even when considered as a 'formal' process, it cannot be defined except in terms which essentially involve matter.[6]

The bodily instrument which moves the animal is, as we noted above, described as 'common' to the body and the soul.[7] We are now in a position to understand what this means. However, first it may be helpful to consider Aristotle's discussion of desire.

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[5] Contrast *Philebus* 34a3ff where the soul and the body are described as jointly (*koinē*) in one single passion and jointly (*koinē*) moved when the body suffers in a given way which reaches through to the soul (in contrast with cases where the body suffers and the soul is oblivious). In this case the soul suffers a passion (*pathos*) 'together with the body' which it can later recall it without the body. The passion in question belongs to the soul even if the body has also to be moved at the same time and in the same way if the soul is to perceive. The relevant movement of the soul (when it perceives) and that of the body are, in Plato's account here, separable in thought even if the former cannot happen without the latter.

[6] In particular, it will not follow from the fact that perception is a formal change, that is 'at the level of form alone', not essentially involving any material change. Contrast Johansen (1998: 290n10), quoting Buryneat (1995: 431).

[7] It is important to note that the version of hylomorphism Aristotle introduces in *De Anima* 1.1, as I have interpreted it, is not the one generally attributed to him in recent discussion by friends and critics alike. For in their view (but not in his), the psychological and the physical 'components' or 'parts' of anger are by definition separable even if not separable in existence. In their interpretation, matter does not play the role of determinant in determining the specific type of psychophysical process involved.

3. Desire: a suggested model for this and other processes common to body and soul

Since anger is a type of desire (403a31), there should be similar types of definition for both. Indeed, Aristotle begins this section of *De An.* 1. 1 by commenting that he is concerned with the affections (*pathe*) of the soul quite generally, including sensual desire (*epithumein*) and perception as well as anger and fear (403a5–7). Throughout the remainder of the first chapter of *De Anima* he seems to be working out a model for the case of anger, confidence, and fear which can apply to all (or most) of the affections of the soul mentioned at the beginning of this section (403b16–19). It is particularly compelling to see this model as applying to sensual desire (*epithumia*), which elsewhere is counted as a passion of the same general type as anger, fear, and confidence (*NE* 1105b21ff).

If this is correct, we can derive the following general account of sensual desire and how it moves the animal:

(1) Sensual desire, like anger, is an inextricably psychophysical process (perhaps essentially involving some heating of the blood).

(2) As a result of the heat provided by desire, there is a further inextricably psychophysical process in the part of the agent which corresponds to the hinge joint: for this process too is common to the body and the soul.

(3) As a result of this second process the limbs are moved in just the way required for the action desired. The moving of the limbs will also be an inextricably psychophysical process (like weaving).

On this account, Aristotle can describe the part of the agent mentioned in (2), the instrument by which desire moves the animal, as one to be investigated among the functions common to body and soul (433b19–20) because the processes there are inextricably psychophysical ones. This part is described as a 'bodily' one not because sensual desire or anger are not themselves bodily processes but rather because it is bulky, not fine-grained or light in the way heat-based processes are. (For this contrast between bulky elements and fine-grained ones, see *De An.* 404b31–405a7. It is a distinction within what we would count as bodily elements.)

The simplicity of this picture should not obscure its distinctive features. More specifically:

(1) It is not a dualist account in which a purely psychological phenomena results in the movement of the body. For desire, in Aristotle's account, is already a psychophysical process, not a purely psychological one. (Nor is it the account the spiritualist would offer. For, in it, the body is not endowed with a capacity for a purely psychological process: it is not 'pregnant with conscious striving'.)

(2) Nor is it the account materialists would offer because it lacks the two features they require. It does not have either the purely psychological aspect which specifies what desire is (in non-material terms) or the purely physical process (defined in purely physical terms) which grounds (or underlies) the relevant desire. For sensual desiring (like being angry) is, in Aristotle's account, an inextricably psychophysical process with its own causal powers. In the materialist picture, by contrast, the purely psychological aspect of desire has its causal power in virtue of its instances being realized (or grounded) in purely physical processes, the sources of the causal efficacy of desire. But in the model so far sketched there is no need to invoke a separable purely physical process (which realises desire) to account for the ability of desire to move our limbs (as its *kath'hauto* cause).[8] The psychophysical causal process causes this to happen by itself.

While this model of sensual desire as 'common to body and soul' follows the pattern set by Aristotle's remarks in *De An.* 1.1 and helps to account for the (apparently) unproblematic way in which desire moves the animal in *De An.* 3. 10, it is not spelled out in *De Anima*. *De Motu Animalium*, to which I shall now turn, provides a considerably more detailed picture of how all this happens.

4. The role of desire in *De Motu:* its place in Aristotle's four-stage model

In *De Motu,* Aristotle characterises that which moves the limbs as a bodily part, capable of becoming bigger or smaller and changing its shape under the influence of heat and cold. (701b12–16).[9] These changes in shape and size move the animal by releasing and slackening its sinews and bones (701b9–10). The instrument in question is capable of pushing and pulling the animal because of its expansion and contraction (703a18–20). In order to be capable of this it needs to be a body which is heavier than fire (703a21–3). Its distinctive constituent, the connate *pneuma*, is capable of contraction and expansion of this type. These increases in size are not forced since they are not contrary to the nature of the internal *pneuma* (703a21–3).

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[8] For this kind of account, see Putnam and Nussbaum (1992: 39ff). They talk of Aristotle's 'psychological processes as realised in physiological ones'. For a different type of materialist interpretation, see Charles (1984: 217ff).

[9] I take the necessary connection between the thought/imagination of some object of pursuit and (e.g.) heating to be an efficient causal one (compare that between memory and heating, etc. in 702a5ff). Why then does Aristotle say next that the painful and pleasant are [only] nearly always followed by heating and chilling (701b35ff)? One thought would be that are some cases of pleasure which are not followed by heating and chilling (even when grasped by thought or imagination): those that are not objects of pursuit or avoidance (because they are remote in time or place). Such cases might arise if the theoretical intellect thinks of something that is pleasant but there is no desire to obtain it.

The heating and cooling which produce these changes in size are occasioned by the thought or imagination or perception of a given object. When I think of or imagine an object which is to be pursued or avoided, my thought or imagination of it is necessarily followed (*akolouthei*) by chilling and heating (701, b35ff), which Aristotle describes as accompanying (*'meta'*) confidence, fear or sexual arousal (*aphrodisaiamoi*). For if, as Aristotle remarks, what is thought of or imagined is pleasant or painful, we nearly always respond by being warmed or cooled (702a3–5). As a result of these changes in temperature, that part of the body which initiates movement changes in size in the way required to move the limbs of the body.

There are, I shall claim, four stages in the case of action on emotion described in *De Motu* chapter 8:

[1] The object of pursuit or avoidance is thought about or imagined. Such objects may include your friend, enemy, a cool drink, etc.

[2] Fear, confidence, or sexual arousal occur, accompanied by heat or coldness.

[3] The connate *pneuma* expands or contracts.

[4] The limbs (including bones and sinews) move.

Aristotle refers to Stage [2] as occurring in the regions around the origins of the organic parts (702a7ff: see 702b21). These changes lead to expansion and contraction in the adjacent parts (Stage [3]: 702b22–3), which generate animal movement (702b23–4) via the bones and sinews (701b6–11): Stage [4]. Aristotle introduces the connate pneuma as what expands and contracts at Stage [3] (703a22ff), spelling out in more detail what is involved in the expansion and contraction he had mentioned earlier (701b12ff).

Aristotle, in *De Motu* chapter 8, applies his account of action on emotion to include cases where, at Stage [1], the object in question is remembered or anticipated (702a5–7). In these memory and anticipation are the causes for the changes in temperature at stage [2]. The heating and cooling involved at Stage [2] requires that the regions where it occurs are capable of changing (e.g.) from hard to soft as they heat up and cool down (702a8–10). This heating and cooling will lead to further resulting affections (702a12ff) which, in turn, will result in the animal's walking (Stage [4]: 702a15–16). Aristotle sums up this case as follows: imagination (Stage [1]) prepares desire *(orexis)* which in turn prepares certain affections, resulting in the 'organic parts' (here, presumably the limbs) moving (702a16–20). The affections in question (if they are caused by heating and cooling) will occur at Stage [3], the limbs' movement at Stage [4]. If so, while there appear to be four stages here also, they are now somewhat altered, running as follows:

[1] Object of pursuit is imagined (remembered or anticipated).

[2] Desire (*orexis*).

[3] Certain affections (see reference 'to the account we have given of them: 702a15: I take it that this refers back to the expansion and contraction mentioned in 701b13ff).

[4] The limbs move (the animal walks).

However, while desire has replaced fear, confidence, and sexual arousal at Stage [2], this change should not surprise us. In 702a2ff Aristotle appears to introduce the cases of confidence, fear, and sexual arousal to introduce a general point, especially vivid in their case: when something perceived is painful or pleasant (and as such to be avoided or pursued), cooling or heating follow. This is obvious in their case since heating or cooling are essential to fear, confidence, or sexual arousal (as boiling blood is essential to anger). But heating or cooling will arise whenever we are aware of what is pleasant or painful (even if this is not as obvious as in the case of anger or fear). If so, there will be heating or cooling in all cases of, for example, desire for the pleasant: sensual desires (*epithumia*). Since the relevant type of heating and cooling will be present when we have desires of this sort, Aristotle can easily generalize his claim from his favoured vivid example of certain emotions to desire. All will essentially involve heating or cooling of the relevant type.

This said, there is, perhaps, some unclarity in *De Motu* about the precise extension of the term 'desire' (*orexis*).[10] Aristotle must intend it to apply more widely than to sensual desire alone since he speaks of thought as well as imagination and perception as bringing about the states which (in turn) lead to changes in the organ which causes the limbs, etc., to move (701b33, 701b16ff, picking up the reference in 701a33). Thus, he begins his discussion in *De Motu* 8 in terms of what is to be pursued or avoided, which will (presumably) include objects beyond those of sensual desire. Indeed, since the desire which precedes the relevant movement (701a35) can be brought about by thought, it will sometimes be the result of reasoning from general premisses (as set out in 701a15ff). For, as Aristotle remarks, the final desire can be brought about by reasoning (701a36) and may be (or be based on) a rational wish (701a37). It seems that his earlier reference to 'desire' (*orexis*) applies to all cases of desire, not just to sensual desire. Perhaps, nonetheless, he thought that all such desires involved the object being thought or imagined as pleasant or painful (701b35f). Or perhaps he thought such desires were cases of being attracted to an appropriate object of desire (e.g. the fine) in ways similar to that in which sensual desire is attracted to the pleasant.[11] Either way, he can claim that in all such cases there will be heating and chilling (even if imperceptible to the agent).

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[10] Nor is this, the only lack of clarity: in 702a19 Aristotle replaces his earlier talk of thought, perception, or imagination (701a16, see 701b34: thought and imagination) by a reference to 'imagination brought on by perception or thought'. However, this may simply be a comment on the example considered in the immediately preceding lines: one involving (e.g.) walking towards some non-present object which is remembered or hoped for (702a7ff), where the memory or anticipation arises from perception or thought. It need not show that imagination is always present prior to action. (At this point I am indebted to discussion with Jean-Louis Labarrière.) It is also unclear in *De Motu* 701b34 (i) whether the object of pursuit grasped by thought and imagination is an external object (such as a friend or a drink) or an internal one (such as the 'representation' of an external object) and (ii) whether it is grasped simply as (e.g.) a drink or rather as a drink to be obtained (or as pleasant). These issues lie outside the scope of this chapter.

Desire, it appears, plays a role at Stage [2] in Aristotle's four-stage account. It remains to be seen how it leads to action. To understand this, we need to investigate more closely two questions:

(1) What does it mean to say that fear, confidence, and sexual arousal are accompanied by heating or cooling? How does this apply to desire?

(2) How is the expansion and contraction of the connate *pneuma* caused? What is their nature?

(1) *Confidence and cooling:*

On this issue, we have already gained an understanding of how fear and confidence 'occur with' heating and cooling. Like anger (in the model of *De An.* 1.1) they are inextricably psychophysical processes, essentially types of heating or cooling around the heart. If so, they 'occur with' heating and cooling in a particularly demanding way. They are not to be properly defined as purely psychological phenomena realised by distinct physical processes of heating and cooling. Rather the relevant psychological aspect cannot be defined without reference to heating or cooling. Fear will be an avoidance-directed cooling (of the blood or something similar) around the heart (occasioned by the appearance of one's enemy). One cannot properly define what the relevant type of desire for avoidance is without reference to the cooling of the blood (or something similar).

(2) *Expansion and contraction of the connate pneuma*:

There are two issues here:

[A] *The types of process are common to body and soul:*

The relevant instrumental part is to be investigated amongst the activities common to body and the soul (*De Anima* 433b18ff). Activities (or processes) which are 'common' to the body and the soul, as we have seen, cannot be defined as a combination of psychological and physical components. One cannot say what they are in purely psychological terms as they are types of expanding and contracting, becoming hard and soft, which generate pushing/pulling. Like anger, they are not simply necessarily enmattered in some physical process. Rather, one cannot define what they are without reference to expanding or contracting, pulling or pushing, and so forth. The latter features are of their very essence. Nor can one define the relevant type of physical process without reference to their psychological aspects. This is what I intend by calling these processes 'inextricably psychophysical'. In their case, as in that of nutrition, the processes may be psychophysical in this way even though they need not be objects of conscious awareness (as the Aristotelian soul extends to reaches areas below those of consciousness).

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[11] Gabriel Richardson Lear (2006: 116–36) develops this line of thought.

[B] *The expansion and contraction of the connate pneuma is caused by heat and cold:*

The heat and cold involved in desire is what affects the size and shape of the *connate pneuma*, occasioning processes within it. As Aristotle notes:

> The parts expand because of heat and contract because of cold... (701b15f)

The relevant parts expand and contract in the way required to move the sinews and bones (701b6ff). As a result the animal moves (when all goes well) in the way required for them to do what they desire to do.

Aristotle does not spell out what happens in great detail, seemingly relying on the thought that the heat (or coldness) involved in desire will impact on the *pneuma* and occasion movements there (changes of shape/size, etc.) of the type required. Aristotle uses *pneuma* in a similar way elsewhere: it is the right type of thing to be affected by heat in the way required to bring about a complex result.[12]

Consider Aristotle's use of pneuma in the case of animal reproduction. Its movements are said to be like the processes of arts (*Gen Anim.* 744b32ff), when he writes:

> the sword is produced by movement of the instruments employed which contains the logos of the art. For the art is the starting point and form of what is produced...

The movements in both cases are defined as the ones required for the production of the product aimed at. As Aristotle remarks, 'the movements of the instruments contain the formula [*logos*] of the craft'. The case of the metal worker (or the weaver) provides a clear example of this phenomenon: his movements contain the formula (*logos*) of the art in that one is not able to define them (say what these processes are) without reference to the goals of the craftsman and his/her skill. While they are essentially spatial, there is no defining what they are without reference to the goals and know-how of the craftsman. The relevant movements are the ones which are guided in the appropriate way by his/her skill. In the earlier case, the weaver spins, cards the wool, and ties the knots in the way required to make the coat she is aims to produce. Her actions are vivid examples of inextricably psychophysical processes.

Since the movements of *pneuma* involved in reproduction are like those of the weaver, one will not be able to define them without reference to the goals and capacities of the agent. In the case of the generating parent, the movements in the *pneuma* follow from his nature, not from conscious reasoning (744a33–6, see 740b27–36). But in both this case and that of weaving the nature and identity of the movements themselves will be determined by the capacities and goals of the agent (see *PA* 640b1–3, *Gen Anim.* 734b11–18). As the weaver moves her hands in certain ways and uses certain materials because they are appropriate to her goal, so the generating parent functions in certain ways and operates on certain materials because they are appropriate to its goal. In both cases, the relevant processes will be partially defined in terms of the goals to be achieved.[13]

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[12] Gad Freudenthal (1995) spells out a general theory of this type.

In the case of the *pneuma* involved in action, while the relevant movements will involve increase or decrease in size and hardness and change in shape, there will be no defining the relevant type of increases or changes involved without reference to the goals and know-how (action-producing skills) of the agent. These too will be essentially the types of expansion and contraction involved in achieving his goals. Like the movements of the weaver, they will be inextricably psychophysical processes. While, in *De Motu*, Aristotle does not specify the specific types of increase or size movement of the *connate pneuma* which result in actions, these will be the ones required if the agent is to fulfil his/her goal. From his viewpoint, nothing further need be said about which types of movement are involved. He has done enough for his purpose by defining (as in the case of weaving) the general category in which they will fall ('common to body and soul'), noting their causal antecedents and consequences and pointing to the general bodily features they must have to expand and contract in the appropriate way (703a21–7). As he remarks, the part whose movements they are is naturally well suited to perform its appropriate function (703a35ff). Its expansion and contraction is caused by heating and cooling and causes the body's limbs to move. In doing this the *connate pneuma* (i) has the ability to produce large spatial movements at the periphery of the body on the basis of (sometimes) relatively small heatings and coolings in the region of the heart (701b24ff) and (ii) to bring about those specific spatial movements (such as in the case of weaving) which are required to achieve the agent's goals.

5. Desire, the connate pneuma, and action: an overview of Aristotle's account

We are now in a position more fully to understand Aristotle's brief and initially disappointing comment in *De An* .433b13ff:

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[13] I discuss these issues in more detail in Charles (1988: 26–9).

The instrument by which desire moves the animal is a bodily one: this is why it must be investigated among the functions common to body and soul...

Desire moves the body by means of the connate *pneuma,* itself an essentially and inextricably psychophysical phenomenon. The movements in the *pneuma* are essentially psychophysical, increases in size and shape of the type required to move the limbs so as to act. In order to do this, the instrumental part (whose constituent is connate *pneuma*) must be a bulky body, capable of pushing and pulling (703a22ff). Desire can move the connate *pneuma* because it too is essentially and inextricably psychophysical: the type of heating or cooling which is directed towards to a goal of a given type (one seen as good for the organism).[14] It is because desire is essentially a process of this type that it can succeed in moving the body by means of a psychophysical instrument.[15]

The simplicity of Aristotle's general account (as sketched in *De Anima* and developed in *De Motu*) is a direct result of his conceiving of the relevant processes as inextricably psychophysical. Given this conception, he did not need to address the Cartesian puzzle of how desire (a purely psychological phenomenon) can move the animal. For Aristotle's desire is not the type of purely psychological phenomenon the dualist (or spiritualist) philosopher takes it to be. In his picture, it cannot be defined as the process it is without reference to some physical phenomenon. Nor, when one desires is there a purely psychological phenomenon realised in (constituted by/supervenient on) a distinct particular process of a robustly physical type. Indeed, there need be no particular robustly physical processes of this type present when the person desires to act (contrary to the materialist account of these phenomena.) Aristotle's simple account only appears mysterious when we see it through the distorting lens of post-Cartesian assumptions.

In Aristotle's view, when desire moves the animal, there is a series of basic, fully determinate, psychophysical processes. One cannot define desire simply as a type of heating (without reference to its psychological goal) since it is the type of heating which is directed towards this goal. Nor can one define desire solely in psychological terms (as seeing A as pleasant) since one cannot define the relevant type of seeing without reference to the heating and cooling of the body. Remove that and one has not distinguished desiring from (merely) thinking that A is pleasant. The psychological and physical features can be thought of as determinables, requiring additional determinants to generate the determinate phenomenon of desire. Similar remarks apply to the movements of the connate *pneuma* and the subsequent movement of the limbs.

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[14] Since it is of the essence of the relevant process of heating that it is psychophysical, its nature will be (in principle) distinct from any type of process which is not essentially psychophysical in this way. One cannot expect to be able to define this type of process in terms of ordinary heating or cooling since this type of heating is one which essentially serves certain goals. One could label this as 'vital heat', understood as the type of heat which essentially serves certain teleological goals in the organism.

[15] The main motivation for treating desire as essentially psychophysical differs (somewhat) from that given in the discussion of anger in *De Anima.* The latter rests on the thought that people become angry under certain bodily conditions and not others (403a19ff). In the case of desire, Aristotle's major consideration appears to be that desire has to be a type of heating if it is to have the consequences it does (generate expansion in the *connate pneuma*). The case of desire is not separable from processes of this type (even in thought).

Is desire itself the movement of the connate *pneuma* or of some distinct bodily part which becomes hotter and cooler and, as a result, produces changes in the connate pneuma?[16] It is true that he describes both desire and (by implication) the connate pneuma as 'moved movers' (703a4–7) but this need not commit him to identifying the latter as the body that realizes the former. For he has already marked out a physical point, to be identified with the connate *pneuma,* as what is moved and moves (702b33ff: see 703a13ff) and may simply be comparing its role with that of desire. Later in *De Motu* chapter 10 Aristotle specifies the nature of the connate *pneuma* as being to expand and contract (703a21) while earlier he had associated fear and sexual arousal with heating and cooling (702a6ff). If desire plays the same role as fear and so forth, it too should be connected with heating and cooling and not with the expansion and contraction that follows. If so, desire may be better associated with (for example) blood around the heart (or with what is hot: *De An.* 403a31ff) rather than with the distinctive physical properties of the connate *pneuma* (703a22–5). In this way, it will be distinct from the instrument (*De An.* 433b19) it uses to move the body, where the latter (we learn in *De Motu*) essentially involves the connate *pneuma* (703a12ff). This said, it remains the case that in *De Motu* Aristotle is more concerned to separate the processes of heating (and cooling) from the resultant expanding and contracting than to specify the bodily part which 'houses' desire.[17]

In sum: desire is, in Aristotle's account, like anger: some type of bodily process (perhaps a heating of the blood around the heart) caused in a given way for the sake of a given goal (compare *De Anima* 403a27ff). Both are inextricably psychophysical processes in the way suggested above. What distinguishes desire from (for example) sexual arousal mentioned in *De Motu* 11 or other types of boiling of the blood is that it, unlike them, is inextricably connected with grasping that something is to be done (703b8ff). It is a boiling-of-the blood type of grasping that something is to be done.

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[16] Martha Nussbaum (1978: 157) suggests that *pneuma* may be what materially realizes desire.

[17] I am indebted to Christof Rapp for discussion of this issue.

6. 'Desire moves the animal with an instrument'

Stephen Menn (2002) has argued against what he describes as a 'fashionable' hylomorphic account of the soul. He notes (correctly) that Aristotle describes the body as organic: designed to be used as an instrument (*organon*) for certain purposes. Indeed in *De An.* 433b19 Aristotle talks of desire as 'moving the animal with a bodily instrument'. Thus, for example, the connate *pneuma* is designed to move the animal in the way required to achieve what the agent desires. In this way, the connate *pneuma* is the instrument by which desire sets the animal in motion. If one thinks of desire as a passion of the soul, one might say that (in this case) the connate *pneuma* is the instrument by which the soul sets the animal in motion.

When desire moves the body with an instrument, it does so because (or so I have argued) it is an inextricably psychophysical (hylomorphic) process, the realization of an essentially hylomorphic capacity to desire. Thus, for example, in the case of anger, the desire for revenge is a specific type of boiling of the blood around the heart which moves the *pneuma* and so sets the animal in action. Although the bodily instruments by which desire moves the animal are distinct from desire, this does not mean that desire itself is not a type of bodily process. Indeed, it has to be a psychophysical process (a type of bodily process) if it is to move the connate *pneuma* in the way it does. If desire is a passion of the soul, the relevant aspects of the soul will themselves be essentially psychophysical (or bodily).

Menn understands Aristotle's talk of instruments by which the soul moves the body differently. In his interpretation, the soul, as user of the body, is separate from the body, standing to it as user to used (as the pilot stands to the rudder he uses to steer the ship). Further, in his view, since the soul is separate (in this way) from the body, it is not itself bodily but must be non-bodily. Indeed, in Menn's interpretation, Aristotle comes close to (Cartesian) dualism, only avoiding it by understanding the soul as like an art which (in some mysterious way) 'uses' the tools of its trade and even (Menn suggests) the artisan to make its products.

There is a weakness in Menn's argument. Aristotle, let us assume, thinks that the desiring faculty of the soul is a hylomorphic, inextricably psychophysical, compound. He can, nevertheless, still regard it as separate from those parts of the body it uses to obtain its ends. The hands, the action joint, or the connate *pneuma* can all be regarded as the instruments designed to initiate movements caused by the inextricably psychophysical process of desiring. Indeed, Aristotle's discussion in *De Motu* of the way in which desire causes the animal to move shows that he is thinking of what occurs in this way. It does not follow from the fact that desire is separable from the bodily organ it uses to move the animal that desire itself is other than a psychophysical (bodily) process.

There is a further point. The hand, let us assume, is a purely bodily instrument used by and separate and distinct from the soul. But this assumption is consistent with the soul's using of the hand being a psychophysical (or hylomorphic) process. It does not follow from the fact that the soul uses separate instruments that its using them is anything other than a psychophysical process, essentially the realization of a hylomorphic compound (e.g. the faculty for desire). Once we distinguish between the instrument used and the agent's using of the instrument, it is clear that even if the instrument is (like the loom) purely bodily, the weaver's using the loom can itself be a psychophysical process, initiated by other psychophysical passions of the soul (such as desiring, etc.).

So far, following Menn, I have spoken of the soul (or passions of the soul) as moving the animal. However, in Aristotle's account (when carefully, set out) it is the person (or the composite), not the soul, that moves his hand, grieves, and so on. Nor is his point hard to understand since the composite, and not the soul, is the appropriate subject of the essentially psychophysical processes that lead to action. When Aristotle, on occasion, allows himself to talk of the soul as causing certain changes (thinking, movements) he is quick to avoid saying that the soul does things, preferring his own formulation in terms of the person. 'It is better not to say that the soul grieves or learns or thinks but man in respect of his soul' (408b13–15). For the soul, conceived of as a purely psychological phenomenon (or set of such phenomena), is not the type of thing which can be the subject of these inextricably psychophysical processes. At this point, Aristotle is best seen as challenging the moves that lead to dualism at the first step: it is not the soul (properly speaking) that moves the animal but the (psychophysical) person.

The desirer is, no doubt, responsive to the goods (or goals) he seeks, themselves the starting point of the process that leads to action. (In some cases these goals may be the goals of skills.) Indeed, the desirer typically aims to achieve these goals. But neither the goals themselves nor the skills are (or can plausibly be) described as 'using' desire (or the desirer) to achieve their ends. Indeed, it is the desirer who uses his skill to achieve the ends he has set himself.

7. Conclusion

Aristotle's account, I have argued, does not fit into the standard categories of post-Cartesian philosophy because it rejects the two assumptions that characterize it. In his view, it is not the case that

[1]* There is a purely psychological feature or process involved in desiring (or a purely psychological description).

[2]* All relevant processes and features are either purely psychological or purely physical or a combination of the two.

Materialist and spiritualist interpreters have erred in seeing Aristotle as occupying a position in the logical space of options defined by Descartes. His account shows that there are more ways of understanding the mind–body relation than are dreamed of in most post-Cartesian philosophy. It remains to be seen whether it can withstand serious scrutiny.

4

Aristotle and Scanlon on Desire and Motivation[1]

Giles Pearson

I am here concerned with:

(i) the role of desires in the motivation of action;

not with:

(ii) the relation of desires to the justification of actions.

I suspect that the correct analysis of (i) is likely to be a precondition for fruitful investigation into (ii), but my argument does not rely on this, and (i) is surely of interest on its own.

Aristotle's fullest account of the role of desire in the motivation of action is provided in *De An.* 3.9–10.[2] There are a number of textual and exegetical difficulties with these chapters, but they are not the focus of my attention in this chapter.[3] Instead, my aim is to draw out certain novel aspects of Aristotle's view by contrasting it with some contemporary work on desire and motivation.

Let me start with a question: what motivates us to act, when we act intentionally? A natural first response is that in many typical cases intentional actions seem to be motivated by *desires*. Why am I heading to the pub? Because I want to. Why do I buy a pint of beer to drink, rather than a shot of whisky? Because that is what I desire to drink. And so on. However, there are a number of obstacles to identifying what motivates us to act, when we act intentionally, with desires. Two of these correspond to the two parts of this chapter:

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[1] An earlier version of this chapter was presented to the Philosophy Department at University College London in 2009. Many thanks to the audience for their questions. Thanks too to Michael Pakaluk for comments on a previous version.

[2] Of course there are other relevant texts, not least *De Motu* 6–8, which comes at the topic from a different angle: see Schofield, Chapter 5, this volume. Clearly, one can accept Schofield's claim that *De Motu* provides Aristotle's main treatment of the role of *phantasia* in the description and explanation of animal movement, while still holding (as I do) that *De An.* 3.9–11 provides Aristotle's main treatment of the role of *desire* in the motivation of action. (Naturally, *phantasia* will be relevant to my account at various points in what follows, but I take what I say to be broadly compatible with Schofield's elaboration of *De Motu* even though I draw primarily from the *De An.* accounts.)

[3] I aim to discuss them on a subsequent occasion; see also Richardson (1992).

(1) In many cases it seems that what serves as the source of motivation for an intentional action is not a desire itself, but what the agent sees as good about acting in the way he desires. And perhaps this analysis can be applied to all cases.

(2) It seems that there is a perfectly good sense of 'desire' in which we can frequently say that we acted intentionally in a way we had no desire to act.

1. The source of motivation

For this part, let me begin by simply stating the key theses (Ts) of Aristotle's account I am interested in. They can be listed as follows:

(T1) The faculty of desire (*to orektikon*) is the part of us in virtue of which we are motivated to act intentionally (*De An.* 3.10, 433b10–11; 3.10, 433b16–17; 3.10, 433b27–8, with 3.9 432b15–17; see also 3.10, 433a21; 3.10, 433a31–433b1).[4]

(T2) What motivates us to act 'first of all' is the object of desire (*orekton*) (*De An.* 3.10, 433b10–11; 3.10, 433a27–8; see also 3.10, 433a18–20).

(T3) The object of desire is an (apparent) practical good (*De An.* 3.10, 433a27–9; see also 3.10, 433b15–16).

(T4) The object of desire motivates us to act by being 'thought of or grasped through *phantasia* (*tō noēthēnai ē phantasthēnai*)' (*De An.* 3.10, 433b11–12).

Now, in extracting these theses from the complex argument of *De An.* 3.9–10 we obviously lose the context in which Aristotle arrived at them. But as the aim of this chapter is to highlight what is distinctive about Aristotle's views by placing them in a contemporary setting, I shall explain his claims in more detail only as and when required. To begin, let me briefly sketch one thread through some contemporary work.

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[4] Here, and in the other theses, Aristotle's 'that which moves' (*to kinoun*) has been replaced with 'that which motivates us to act'. Although the 'act' part of this potentially widens Aristotle's account (he is concerned with cases in which we move spatially (*kinesiskata topon*), whereas we may think that 'action' extends beyond such movement), the addition of 'motivates' seems reasonable given that Aristotle seeks to provide an account of animal movement that starts from the agent's perspective, and which appeals to how he construes his situation. (Aristotle insists that the movement he is concerned with 'is always for the sake of something and involves imagination and desire; for nothing which is not desiring or avoiding something moves unless as a result of force': *De An.* 3.9, 432b15–17; and holds, as we see in T4, that what moves us is something [an object of desire] that has been grasped through some intentional state.)

Thomas Scanlon (1998) notes that the notion that all intentional actions are motivated by desires seems true only if desires are taken to include what Nagel called motivated as well as unmotivated states.[5] For, on Scanlon's view, if 'desire' is used in an unqualified sense, many elements of the set of desires 'do not seem to be *sources* of motivation but rather the motivational consequences of something else, such as the agent's recognition of something as a duty, or as supported by a reason of some other kind' (1998: 37, emphasis in original). G. F. Schueler (1995: 31–3) suggests that we can see this point most clearly if we consider a case of practical deliberation. He gives the example of his considering whether or not he shall attend a meeting at his son's school. He has no desire to go to the meeting: it will be boring, involve driving to the school, and so on; in fact, he has a positive desire to stay at home and read a book. The only argument for his going to the meeting, as it seems to him, is that parents have a responsibility to attend and he is a parent. Nevertheless, this argument appears to him the stronger one, and he decides to go. Schueler's point is that, in the process of his practical reasoning, what convinces him to go to the meeting is not (as it appears to him) a *desire* to do what he has a responsibility to do, but (as it appears to him) the fact that he has a responsibility to go. Even if he thinks that he wants to do what he has a responsibility to do, this is not what he regards as giving him a reason to go to the meeting, and so motivating him, but the responsibility itself.

If this is right, it would seem to leave Nagel's unmotivated desires ('the appetites and in certain cases the emotions' (1970: 29)) as the only desires likely to be actual sources of motivation. However, Scanlon argues that appetites, such as hunger and thirst, actually fall into the same pattern as motivated desires. If I am thirsty, for instance, the description of this, on Scanlon's account, involves three elements: (i) 'a present sensation (the dryness in my throat)', (ii) 'the belief that some action would lead to a pleasant state in the future', and (iii) 'my taking this future good to be a reason for so acting' (1998: 38). The dryness in my throat, and the fact that it will not disappear on its own, give me reason to *believe* that a drink of water in the near future will provide this particular pleasure; 'but', suggests Scanlon, 'the motivational work seems to be done by my taking this future pleasure to count in favour of drinking' (1998: 38). If Scanlon is right, it will be a general feature of motivation that it stems from perceived facts, not from desires (whether motivated or unmotivated) themselves.[6]

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[5] Nagel (1970: 29) points to two different ways we can come to have desires: unmotivated desires, 'like the appetites and in certain cases the emotions', which 'simply come to us' or 'simply assail us'; and motivated desires, for example 'a desire to shop for groceries, after discovering nothing appetising in the refrigerator', which are arrived at 'by decision and after deliberation'. Schueler (1995: 15–28) provides some critical discussion of Nagel's distinction. See also Schiffer's (1976: 197–8) related distinction between 'reason-following' and 'reason-providing' desires.

In this way, Scanlon argues we should ultimately give up thinking of desires as motivating us, and think instead of perceived reasons as doing so. What is it, he asks, about certain kinds of perceived facts that enable them to motivate us? There seems to be, he suggests, a key evaluative element to the perceived facts. In order for Schueler to be motivated by his (perceived) responsibility to go to the meeting at his son's school, he must see fulfilling this responsibility as valuable or good in some respect. In order for Scanlon to be motivated to drink some water he must construe doing so as good or pleasurable in some way. And this evaluative element seems to be a general feature of (at least the majority of) the perceived facts that motive us to perform intentional actions.[7] But to see something good or desirable about Φ-ing is to see Φ-ing in a favourable light; and to see Φ-ing in a favourable light is, on Scanlon's view, to see that certain considerations count in favour of Φ-ing; and to see that certain considerations count in favour of Φ-ing is, Scanlon thinks, to see that one has a reason to Φ. Thus, Scanlon suggests, 'we should not take "desires" to be a special source of motivation, independent of our seeing things as reasons' (1998: 40); rather, even with unmotivated desires, such as appetites, we should accept that the source of motivation is 'the agent's perception of some consideration as a reason, not some additional element of "desire"' (1998: 40–1). We have thus quickly moved from the idea that it seemed plausible that desires move agents to intentional actions, to the notion that what actually moves them are their perceived *reasons*.

This is merely intended to be a brief sketch of Scanlon's view, and obviously much would need to be said to defend it. But it is at least sufficient for the purpose of bringing Aristotle's account into relief. Aristotle agrees that what motivates agents is what they see as good about acting that way (T3), but thinks that this is sensibly characterized as agents being motivated by an object of desire (T2), and hence that such motivation is appropriately construed as an activity of the agent's desiderative nature/aspect (the *orektikon*) (T1). It should be noted that, in holding that we are motivated by objects of desire, Aristotle is not committed to the view that we are motivated by the *contents* of our desires. It often seems that the contents of our desires are just the actions we desire, not the respect in which we see so acting as desirable or good. If I ask you: 'What do you want to do now?', you might answer 'I want to go for walk', where the content of your desire seems to be 'to go for a walk', not what you see as good or valuable about going for a walk. However, although in such cases the content of the desire does not make reference to what the agent sees as valuable about acting in the way in question, it does seem reasonable to ascribe to the agent a cognitive state, the content of which reveals the object of desire.[8] If you want to go for a walk, then you presumably think going for a walk is valuable in some respect, say, because it provides you with fresh air, or gets you out in the sunshine. And it is (ultimately), on Aristotle's view, the object of desire that is revealed in the content of *this* cognitive state, not the content of the desire, which motivates you to act in the way in question (hence T4). If you want to go for a walk because you think being out in the fresh air and sunshine will be pleasurable, it is *that being out in the fresh air and sunshine will be pleasurable* that reveals the object of your desire (the pleasurable experience of being out in the fresh air and sunshine); and it is this that motivates you to go for a walk.[9]

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[6] An early objection to Scanlon's view was provided by Stuart Hampshire in his 1999 review of Scanlon's 1998 book. Hampshire asks us to consider an amateur collector of Italian Renaissance bronzes, who 'falls in love' with a particular bronze on sale, even though it is of the wrong period and of doubtful provenance, and so adds nothing to his own collection. Hampshire contends: 'the intensity of his desire is the reason that he would give for spending so much money and his justification also, and not any further calculation or thought' (1999: 22). In fact, Scanlon acknowledged that there might be cases in which 'because I felt like it' could serve as a reason to do something (1998: 48), but maintained that they were 'special, rather trivial cases, not central examples that provide the pattern on which all other cases of doing something for a reason should be modelled' (1998: 48). Dancy (2000: ch. 2) attempts to argue, even in the light of such inclinations and urges, that desires are always responses to perceived reasons.

[7] For discussion of the qualification, see for instance Stocker (1979), Velleman (1992), and Raz (1999).

But this brings me to a key feature of Scanlon's account that Aristotle would not be able to accept; namely, the equation of such objects of desire with perceived reasons. To see why Aristotle would not accept this, we should first note what Scanlon thinks perceived reasons are. On his account, perceived reasons are inextricably bound up with beliefs. In order for an agent to take some consideration to be a reason for him, he must believe that consideration, and take it to be a reason for the attitude or action in question. In order to take a hat's being day-glo pink as a reason for not buying it (Scanlon's example), the agent would have to believe that the hat in question is day-glo pink and take that fact as a reason not to buy it (1998: 56). However, Scanlon does not think that perceived reasons *simply are* beliefs; rather, he holds that they are *the contents of* beliefs. This is because, on his view, what the agent would cite as his reason for not buying the hat would not be a belief itself, but what is picked out by the 'that' clause of his belief: the hat's being day-glo pink (1998: 56).

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[8] Thus, on my understanding, the 'object' of a desire to Φ has to reveal what the agent sees as good about Φ-ing, whereas the content of a desire need not; contrast Stampe (1987: 336, and 336n3).

[9] Thus the object of desire will be revealed by the answer to the question: 'Why do you want to go for a walk?' (although there will no doubt be different levels of answer that could be given to that question). In some cases it can seem appropriate to say that the content of the desire reveals the object of desire, e.g. 'I want to eat that delicious ice cream'. In such cases, desire-contents seem to incorporate the requisite representational state; i.e. not just 'Φ-ing', but 'Φ-ing is good in respect c'. (This point relates to the question of whether we should countenance 'besires', mental states that have both mind-to-world and world-to-mind direction of fit—but this issue is not crucial for me here; see e.g. Altham (1986) and Smith (1994: 118ff).)

Likewise, in the thirst example, the agent has to believe that a drink of water in the near future will provide him with a pleasant state and that this counts in favour of drinking; but the perceived reason, on Scanlon's view, is not simply a belief, but the content of a belief: that this future pleasure counts in favour of drinking (1998: 38 with 56).

Now, as we have just noted, Aristotle would agree that it is the contents of cognitive states (when these reveal objects of desire) that motivate us, not cognitive states themselves. This is the general force of T4. But T4 mentions two different cognitive states that can grasp objects of desire: thought and *phantasia*. For the sake of argument, let us grant that desire contents grasped by 'thought' (*noēsis*) may equate to contents of beliefs, in Scanlon's sense. Nevertheless, contents grasped through *phantasia* are distinct from these. Aristotle maintains that *phantasia* is not a kind of belief (*doxa*) and argues that contents of *phantasia* (*phantasmata*) can even contradict the contents of one's beliefs (*De An.* 3.3, 428a18–b9, and see below). Instead, *phantasiai* are 'appearances' or 'construals' deriving from perception in some way (a 'movement which comes about as a result of the activity of perception': *De An.* 3.3, 428b25–26, 429a1–2); whether from occurrent perceptual encounters, or from previously stored perceptual content that might be modified or reinterpreted internally, as in dreams (see, for example, *Insomn.* 1, 459a14–22, *De An.* 3.3, 429a1–2). In the remainder of this section, I shall attempt to develop these claims in more detail. (In so doing, I shall sometimes refer to such perceptually grounded *phantasiai* as 'perception-based construals'; cf. Roberts' [1988, 1996, 2003] use of 'construal'.)

What motivates Aristotle's view is, in part, the aim to provide a unitary account of motivation that encompasses both human locomotion as well as the motivations of non-rational animals (and infants) and yet without ascribing beliefs to the latter. Scanlon claims:

> The capacities I am attributing to a rational creature include both the capacities to recognise, assess, and be moved by reasons for belief and the capacities to recognise, assess, and be moved by reasons for other attitudes such as intention, fear, and admiration. These reflective capacities set us apart from creatures who, although they can act purposefully, as my cat does when she tries to get into the cabinet where the cat food is kept, cannot raise or answer the question whether a given purpose provides adequate reason for action. (1998: 23)

I shall agree with Scanlon that his cat, precocious though she may be, cannot raise or answer questions about whether specific purposes provide adequate reasons for action or not. And yet what motivates her 'purposive' actions? Human action is usually purposive, but on Scanlon's account it is nearly always based on what agents take to be their reasons. So why should there not be an analogous way in which the purposive actions of Scanlon's cat can be understood from her perspective? Aristotle's suggestion is that non-rational animals are responding to the contents of perception-based construals (*phantasmata*) (see for example *De An.* 3.3, 429a4–6), which prompt them to certain courses of action owing to their evaluative dimension. The evaluative significance of snakes to various animals, for example, or of bones to dogs, or felines to the tomcat would be, on this account, represented to such creatures through perception-based construals.[10]

Scanlon refers to attitudes such as belief and intention as 'judgment-sensitive attitudes'. These are 'attitudes that an ideally rational person would come to have whenever that person judged there to be sufficient reasons for them and that would, in an ideally rational person, 'extinguish' when that person judged them not to be supported by reasons of the appropriate kind' (1998: 20).[11] Scanlon holds that it 'is difficult to see how beings could be capable of judgement-sensitive attitudes without the capacity for language' (180), and hence that those beings capable of such attitudes 'seems to extend very little if at all beyond the class of human beings' (ibid.). But although the desires of non-rational animals clearly cannot be judgement-sensitive in this sense (such creatures are surely unable to form judgements concerning whether they have sufficient reason for their respective attitudes), their attitudes may still be what we could call 'perception-sensitive'. Just as creatures that are responsive to reasons can be mistaken about what reasons they have and subsequently realize their mistake, so too non-rational creatures can have mistaken perceptions and subsequently become aware of their mistake. Scanlon might take himself to have reason to buy a computer, when in fact he does not (1998: 43–4), but so too the snake the animal fears may have just been a stick or an old piece of rope; the dog may be looking only at a plastic replica of a bone, a shop dummy to sell the real McCoy; and the tomcat might in fact be pursuing another tomcat.[12] And just as Scanlon might stop desiring the new computer if he realizes it will not be of any benefit to him, so too if the animal gets closer to the stick and notices it is not a snake it might stop having the emotion, or if my dog, drooling at the bone in the shop window, gets thrown the plastic replica, he might cease to desire it insofar as it fails to meet other perceptual requirements, namely smelling or tasting as it should. In addition, creatures that are mistaken about the reasons they have might fail to respond to reasons they realise they have even when they realise their mistake. Scanlon might not be able to stop desiring the new computer even when he knows it will be of no real benefit to him. In such cases, agents act irrationally or in a way that is open to rational criticism. But equally animals that have been mistaken perceptually might fail to respond appropriately when they become aware of their perceptual mistake. Perhaps, on occasion, the animal continues to fear the stick despite having sufficient perceptual evidence that it is not a snake; perhaps my dog is so caught up in his desire that for a short while he licks and drools over the plastic bone-shaped dummy. Obviously, it is not that the animal should stop having the emotion or desire *insofar as it is rational or responsive to reasons*, since we have agreed these animals lack judgement-sensitive attitudes. But in such cases there seems to be something analogous to the normativity involved with reasons: given the animal's awareness of the situation, it *should* act or respond differently, but somehow its normal way of functioning breaks down and it fails to react appropriately. Just as Scanlon might not be able to stop desiring the new computer even when he knows it will be of no real benefit to him, so too a cat may be unable to stop construing a stick as a fearful snake. Insofar as we are rational and functioning well we react accordingly and respond appropriately to the reasons we perceive ourselves to have and, analogously, insofar as animals function well and react accordingly they respond appropriately to things they perceive as having the specific significances in question. It *is* appropriate for animals to fear poisonous snakes. Unlike a stick, the snake possesses significance and importance, something for animals to be concerned about, and it typically *appears* that way to them. Equally, the bone behind the shop window is something that is of significance for the dog. Unlike plastic bone-shaped objects, the real McCoy is an appropriate thing for dogs to lick and drool over when they lay their paws on it.

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[10] Scanlon thinks he can 'capture an essential element in the intuitive notion of an (occurrent) desire' by what he calls 'desire in the directed-attention sense'. This is where 'the thought of P keeps occurring to him or her in a favourable light, that is to say, if the person's attention is directed insistently toward considerations that present themselves as counting in favour of P' (1998: 39). But it often seems that animals have something equivalent. A dog may drool, salivate, and stare at the bone in the shop window; a squirrel may persistently chase another squirrel around the tree and across the lawn; a tomcat may pursue a feline with quite obvious attention-directed intent, and so on. We thus seem to need a version of Scanlon's formula stripped of content that explicitly requires one to be a rational creature; perhaps: 'P keeps appearing to the creature in a favourable light, that is to say, if the creature's attention is directed insistently toward features of P that present it in a favourable light' (where 'appear' stands for the animal's perception-based construal)? See Roberts (1996) for an interesting account of animal emotion that attempts to do justice to the animal's perspective.

[11] Suppose, for example, you judge that the pleasure you would get from eating a hot curry is sufficient reason for you to go for dinner at an Indian restaurant tonight. If you judge this way, then insofar as you are rational, you will form the intention to do so. But suppose later you remember that hot curries often give you stomachache, and judge this to count decisively against going to the restaurant on this occasion. Then, in such a scenario, you would, insofar as you are rational, cease to have the intention.

It is worth noting that Aristotle has a reason for thinking that perception *alone* is insufficient to account for non-rational desires. On his view, perception is restricted to providing us with information about the present, an occurrent encounter with the world (see especially *De Mem.* 1, 449b13–15; 1, 449b25–7), whereas being motivated by an object of desire essentially involves a future-directed dimension, a representation of how the world *would be* if the agent performed the act under consideration. When I see an apple and am motivated to pursue it as a result of seeing it, this requires representing the apple as something it would be good or pleasurable to interact with through eating: I do not simply see the apple, I represent it as something that *would be* good or pleasurable to eat. (Of course, this will often occur instantaneously.) Because motivation involves the grasping of *prospects*, it goes beyond our current encounters, and so requires something in addition to perception. Therefore, since Aristotle does not ascribe beliefs and thoughts to non-rational animals, he ascribes to them (or at least those capable of moving themselves)[13] perception-based *phantasiai* that can supply the information required to explain their desires from their perspective (3.10, 433a11–12).

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[12] I leave it open how this last case might work, lacking the relevant ethological knowledge—but perhaps scents are accidentally transferred, or some artificial scent introduced, or some such.

On this account, experiential and perceptual states can prompt the creature to have *phantasiai* with the content that some action would be valuable in some way (prompt it to *construe* acting that way as valuable in some respect; make it *appear* to it that so acting would be valuable; etc.), without that process involving rational capacities. As mentioned earlier, there is more than one way this might work. Continuing with the thirst example, most simply, if water is visible, perception will supply the information that water is present, but *phantasia* will be required to supply information about the desirability of the prospect of drinking the water, and will thus enable the animal to encounter the water as imbued with significance in such a way that prompts it to drink it. If water is not visible, the creature can be prompted to seek some by a *phantasia* (stemming from previously stored/modified perceptual content) that represents the prospect of drinking water as pleasant.[14]

Suppose we grant that it is at least plausible that the desires of non-rational creatures can sensibly be understood from their perspective, by an appeal to perception-based construals. It might still be held that all of *our* desires are grounded in contents of beliefs, rather than in contents of perception-based construals. Since we have rational capacities and form beliefs, and since belief for us is a more authoritative capacity than perception-based *phantasia* (we acknowledge that we ought to follow our well-grounded beliefs over the way things simply appear to us), it could be contended that our belief-based attitudes 'swallow up' the space present in non-rational animals that permits the formation of non-belief based desires, 'and that consequently all of our desiderative responses ultimately stem from beliefs we possess. If so, Scanlon could accept Aristotle's analysis of animal desire, but maintain that the human case follows the model he has developed.

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[13] See Lorenz (2006: ch. 10) for the qualification—I hope on another occasion to consider Lorenz's alleged exception to the rule that desire requires *phantasia*.

[14] The point in the last two paragraphs about the limitations of perception, for Aristotle, is consistent with his claim, in *De Motu*. 6, 700b17f, that perception, alongside *phantasia* and thought, can count as a 'mover' of animals. As Schofield argues (Chapter 5, this volume), Aristotle is there considering 'triggers' of animal movement, and I am not denying that perception can serve as such a trigger (e.g. seeing an apple can trigger a desire to eat it)—I am only denying that perception can itself grasp the prospect of an object of desire (say, 'eating the apple would be pleasant'), since that essentially involves a future-directed dimension, and so minimally requires *phantasia* or thought (hence T4).

Aristotle contends, by contrast, that we too can be motivated to act simply in response to our perception-based *phantasiai* (see for example *De An.* 3.3, 429a4–8, 3.10, 433a9–12).[15] That there might be such motivating perception-based construals, even in the human case, may ironically be implied even by Scanlon's own account. Before his discussion of thirst as reason-based (which I considered at the beginning of this part of this chapter), Scanlon acknowledged that there are 'mere states such as hunger (as distinguished from taking oneself to have a reason for seeking food) or tiredness or distraction' (1998: 20), and maintained that although such states can affect our judgements about the reasons we have (for example when we are tired it may seem as though nothing is worth doing), they need not 'depend on any judgment about reasons'. But then, if we assume that hunger and thirst are relevantly similar, so that the account we give of the one may be transferred, *mutatis mutandis*, to the other, Scanlon appears to give two different accounts of such states. In the first, they are simply experiential or felt states, for example 'the unpleasant sensation of dryness in my mouth and throat'. This is the sense just mentioned in which thirst or hunger are distinguished from 'judgment-sensitive attitudes' and are instead characterized as 'mere feelings'. In the second, they amount to our taking ourselves to have a reason to seek drink or food. In this sense, thirst and hunger are not the experiential states or present sensations themselves, but are 'for, or prompted by, experiential states' (1998: 37). Here, thirst, for example, involves the three-element analysis I described at the beginning of this part of my paper, and is reason-based. Now, as we have seen, Aristotle's account postulates that there is something between having a 'mere feeling' of thirst or hunger, on the one hand, and 'taking oneself to have reason to look for drink or food', on the other. But, in fact, Scanlon's own comment that his reason-based versions of thirst and hunger are *prompted* by experiential states might itself seem to suggest as much. An experiential state that 'prompts' already looks to be more than 'a mere feeling', when this is specified simply as an uncomfortable physical state or present sensation, since it appears to have *direction*, to be direct*ing* its owner towards something that would relieve or relinquish the uncomfortable experiential state in question. But if an experiential state can on its own prompt reactions, one might well question why, on Scanlon's account, we always need to invoke belief contents (for example that drinking would feel good) to explain the desires that stem from them.

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[15] It should be acknowledged that at the end of *De An.* 3.10 Aristotle divides *phantasia* into two kinds; perceptual (*aisthētikē*) and deliberative (*logistikē*) (433b29). He discusses the latter more at the beginning of 3.11 (434a5–10). By '*phantasia*', in this chapter, I mean only the former, which in the 3.10 passage Aristotle explicitly claims is the kind of *phantasia* that is shared by 'the other animals' (433b29–30).

To support the idea that we might not, one might also appeal to the phenomenology of certain experiences. I enter my house and encounter an amazing *smell* of bacon cooking. Immediately, I am overwhelmed by a strong desire for bacon—the smell itself, as it were, attracts me—without my thinking about the pleasant smell and thereupon forming the belief that this counts in favour of eating some bacon. Again, people who used to be heavy smokers might sometimes, when they see or smell people smoking in certain situations, find themselves wanting to smoke—and this can seem to occur simply in response to a perceptual construal, without the agent forming the belief that smoking would be good in some respect; and so on. Thus a number of our desires appear not only not grounded in deliberation or reflection, but also not grounded in conscious beliefs at all. Indeed, it may even be possible to form such desires whilst simultaneously *thinking about something else*. When, upon catching the whiff of bacon cooking, I form a strong craving for some, I could be contemplating some finer point of Aristotle's account of desire and forming beliefs about that. When I feel a strong desire to smoke, I might be engaged in a conversation about health care, and articulating my beliefs about that; and so on.[16]

Scanlonians might reply to this, I imagine, by pointing out that they are not claiming that all attitudes are consciously or reflectively formed, just that they are formed in response to perceived reasons (see 1998: 38–9). After all, as Nagel pointed out (1970: 29), beliefs are often formed (for example in response to perceptual information) without conscious thought, but they are responses to perceived reasons none the less. So perhaps the attitudes in the examples I have cited are also responses to perceived reasons, even though they are not consciously or reflectively formed? The point earlier is reaffirmed: since we possess beliefs, and belief is more authoritative than perception, our desiderative attitudes will be formed in response to perceived reasons (i.e. contents of beliefs), whether reflectively or otherwise.

And yet the attitudes under consideration seem very similar to the perception-based desires of non-rational animals. Thus if one accepts that non-rational animals can be motivated by the contents of their perception-based construals, one might think that the burden of proof is on the Scanlonians to show that all such attitudes in us are in fact belief-based. But is there anything else that can be said in favour of Aristotle's view? Aristotle himself provides the key components of an argument supporting his view. In his discussions of *phantasia*, he points out that things can appear (*phainetai*) to us a certain way in spite of the fact that we have a contradictory belief about that very same thing. His famous example is that the sun can appear to us to be a foot across, although we believe it to be bigger than the known world (*De An.* 3.3, 428b2–4; see *De Insomniis* 2, 460b18–22). Since we can experience both contents (the sun as a foot across, the sun as bigger than the known world) at the very same time, and yet would at all times assert the belief to be true, we should, on Aristotle's view, deny that the content of the perceptual construal is provided by belief.[17]

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[16] Another example: when deep in thought about some philosophical topic, I often go to the kitchen, pour a glass of water and drink from it, without taking my mind off the problem I am thinking of. If I think about such cases afterwards, it seems to me that I respond to the dry sensation in my throat, or an uncomfortable experiential state, but that I do not *think* anything about it at the time. Suppose, just as I am filling the glass, a crucial counter-example to Scanlon's account of desire occurs to me, and I form beliefs about that. Here I seem to form a reason-based attitude whilst simultaneously forming *and being motivated to act* by a non-reason-based one.

Someone might reply that instead of understanding the case as involving two states with conflicting content, we should postulate that there are two different beliefs: one about how things perceptually appear, and the other about how things are. On this view, the agent would believe that the sun *appears* a foot across, but also believe that it *is not in fact* a foot across. Since the belief that something perceptually appears to be F does not contradict the belief that it is not in fact F, it is unproblematic to think an agent might have both beliefs at the very same time.

However, this response may itself already concede too much to Aristotle. He is concerned with the content of the construal/appearance itself, not the content of any beliefs we may happen to have about that construal/appearance. The response concedes that an agent can have a perceptual construal of the sun as a foot across; hence Aristotle could maintain that even if we form a belief about this perceptual construal, and the content of *that* does not conflict with the content of our belief about the way things are, we still have the content of the construal itself to consider. And this *does* conflict with the content of our belief about the way things in fact are: we have a perceptual construal of the sun as a foot across—the sun *appears* to us a foot across—even though we believe it is otherwise. It is not the mere fact that the two contents contradict each other that is meant to establish that there are two different cognitive states in play; after all, no doubt most of us, if not all, have beliefs that contradict each other somewhere in our belief systems. Rather, it is: (i) that we experience both contents about the same object at the very same time; (ii) that at no point in the experience do we abandon our belief, or accept that circumstances have changed; and (iii) that at no point in the experience do we think that our belief is now both true and false, or that circumstances have changed to allow this (for the last two points, see *De An.* 3.3, 428b4–9).

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[17] Another example (found in Plato, *Republic* 10, 602c) is the way a straight object looks bent at the point at which it enters water. I can, e.g., see a pencil as bent, even though at the very same time I believe it to be straight (and do not stop believing the pencil straight even while seeing it as bent). Other examples are mirages and reflections. Such phenomena are often appealed to in setting up 'the argument from illusion' as a problem about perception (see Crane 2008 for a nice summary), but here they are being put to a different use. Also, there is some dispute in current literature about what the contents of perceptual experiences are, but for my present purposes I think I can in general remain neutral on this question, except that I must obviously rule out belief-based accounts; see Siegel (2008) for an excellent outline of the debates.

Suppose we accept Aristotle's analysis of such cases; this would still only provide us with the first step of the required argument, since we are concerned with the motivational source of actions, not perceptual illusions per se. But the next step can also be found in *De An.* 3.3. At the end of this chapter, Aristotle claims that humans often act in accordance with their *phantasiai* because their reason is obscured by an emotion (*pathos*) (429a4–8).[18] On Aristotle's view, emotions generally require some evaluative *phantasia*, and so when we are motivated by the content of such emotions against our beliefs, we are being motivated in accordance with evaluative perception-based construals.[19] Consider Maureen's fear of snakes. Suppose Maureen believes that the python in front of her is not dangerous, and does so for a number of reasons—these snakes are non-venomous; this type of snake only asphyxiates and eats things about the size of a rat or smaller; the snake handler is present; Maureen knows and trusts this handler; and so on. It nevertheless seems possible that despite believing the snake to be harmless for these reasons, Maureen also has a perceptual construal of the snake as dangerous which will not go away. Its tongue flashes menacingly out of its bulbous head; its scaly body slithers and glides across the carpet threateningly; and so on. Now, no doubt Maureen (and many others) would believe that the snake *appears* dangerous, whilst simultaneously believing that it is not. But, as before, we are interested in the content of the appearance itself, not the content of beliefs about that appearance. And the content of the appearance is not of the snake as appearing dangerous, but simply *of the snake as dangerous*; and such content does seem to contradict the content of Maureen's belief that the snake is harmless. And since Maureen experiences both contents at the same time, and yet (let us say) would at no point give up her belief that the snake is harmless, the content of the perceptual construal does not seem to be supplied by belief. Aristotle's view suggests the following simple analysis of Maureen's predicament: she perceptually construes the snake as dangerous even though she believes it to be harmless. If this interpretation is accepted, we have here a clear example of a *phantasia* with evaluative content that concerns future prospects ('danger'), and it is easy to see how such content might be capable of motivating the agent to act.

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[18] 'Obscured' (*epikaluptesthai*), here, need not, I think, entail that the agent's reason is blocked entirely, in a way that could be taken to support a Socratic reading of Aristotle's account of akrasia (contrast Moss 2009)): if the agent acts against his reason, his reason could be considered 'obscured' simply in so far as it fails to dictate what he does (cf. *Insomn.* 3. 461b5–7)). Aristotle mentions two other possible things reason might be obscured by, besides emotions; disease and sleep (429a7–8). The disease cases presumably involve hallucinations, or other kinds of delusional state (cf. *NE* 7.5, 1148b25–7, 1149a8–9, 11–12, and especially *Insomn.* 2, 460b11–16); with sleep, Aristotle may have in mind sleepwalking, or possibly someone who acts contra reason owing to some traumatic dream (or perhaps both of these cases).

[19] For the role of *phantasia* in emotions in Aristotle, see e.g. Striker (1996: 291) and, especially, Dow (2010). For a contemporary account of emotions as a type of construal see Roberts (1988 and 2003, ch. 2).

Beyond this, Aristotle could then invite us to apply this kind of analysis to cases in which we do not have contradictory content. Take a standard case of akrasia: Trevor's succumbing to his desire for a third cream cake even though he believes he should not eat another one on grounds of health. Such cases need not be construed as involving contradictory content: the cake can simultaneously be thought both pleasant and unhealthy; it is thus possible that Trevor simply believes the cake would be pleasant, while also believing it would be unhealthy. However, given the previous cases we have just examined, Aristotle could invite us to consider that (on some occasions at least) Trevor might be motivated not (or not only, or not primarily) by the content of a belief that the cake would be pleasant, but by the content of a perceptual construal of the cake as prospectively pleasant to eat. He may be attracted by its enticing perceptual appearance—its creamy, sweet, spongy, delicious demeanour—which, as it were, beckons him forth to eat it, in spite of the fact that he believes he ought not to do so.

Why would someone follow the prompts of a *phantasia* when that entices him to act in a way that he believes he should not? This would appear to constitute some kind of malfunction on the part of the agent. However, I think it would be a comprehensible malfunction, since such perceptual appearances will frequently be very reliable indicators for the formation of beliefs with equivalent content. The water appears hot as steam is coming off it, hence we form the belief that the water is hot; the person appears angry because he is red in the face and clenching his fist, hence we form the belief he is angry; and so on. If the content of our perceptual construals are frequently a reliable guide for belief-formation, then we can understand how, on an occasion when the construal and the belief happen to come apart, we may fail to respond to the belief-content. Our usually reliable perception-based states are, in this instance, off-track for some reason, but we are unable to prevent the construal's evaluative content from having motivational impact on us. Maureen might be motivated to run away from the snake owing to her perceptual construal, even though she accepts she has no reason to do so because she thinks the snake is harmless. Likewise Trevor might be motivated to eat the third cream cake.

There is no doubt much more to be said here, but suppose we grant that Aristotle is right to think that what motivates us are not simply to be identified with the contents of beliefs. It follows that if perceived reasons *are* to be identified as contents of beliefs (as Scanlon holds), then what motivates us cannot simply be identified as perceived reasons. Equally, since we can be motivated by the evaluative contents of more than one state (viz. belief, *phantasia*), it may seem more appropriate to refer to the source of motivation by what such contents have in common, viz. that they reveal *objects of desire*. Or, at least, we seem to need some reason not to refer to them in this way. This brings me to the second part of the paper.

2. Broad and narrow notions of desire

In this section, I shall consider a key objection to identifying the source of motivation with 'objects of desire'. Here I will not start by listing Aristotelian theses, but rather will draw out some other such theses as the argument proceeds.

Nagel claims that the notion that all intentional actions are motivated by a desire 'is true only in the sense that *whatever* may be the motivation for someone's intentional pursuit of a goal, it becomes in virtue of his pursuit *ipso facto* appropriate to ascribe to him a desire for that goal' (1970: 29). And such a desire, on Nagel's view, is not necessary either as 'a contributing influence' or as 'a causal condition' of what motivates us to act (1970: 30). In similar vein, Scanlon notes:

> 'Desire' is sometimes used in a broad sense in which the class of desires is taken to include any 'pro-attitude' that an agent may have toward an action or outcome, whatever the content or basis of this attitude may be. Desires in this sense include such things as a sense of duty, loyalty, or pride, as well as an interest in pleasure or enjoyment. It is uncontroversial that desires in this broad sense are capable of moving us to act, and it is plausible to claim that they are the only things capable of this, since anything that moves us (at least to intentional action) is likely to count as such a desire. (1998: 37)

By 'uncontroversial', here, Scanlon appears to mean 'uninteresting', since he then goes on to claim that a 'substantial thesis claiming a special role for desires in moving us to act would have to be based on some narrower class of desires, which can be claimed to serve as independent sources of motivation' (1998: 37).

There are two initial things to say, on Aristotle's behalf, in response to these assertions:

(1) As we have seen, Aristotle does not think that desires motivate our intentional actions, but rather objects of desire. And objects of desire *are* explanatorily potent. They are the feature(s) of the situation that the agent saw as good about acting in the way in question, and the prospect of them is what motivated the agent to act that way.

(2) As Nagel concedes, to say that an action was performed intentionally entails, on this notion of 'desire', that it was desired; but that at least distinguishes these

actions from those which are not performed intentionally, which need not be desired.[20]

As regards the first point, what exactly is the relation between desire and objects of desire? As Aristotle sees it, when we act intentionally we are motivated to act owing to some object of desire, for example we are motivated to go for a walk because (as it seems to us) it will be pleasant to have a stroll in the sunshine. What motivates us, on this account, is not the desire itself (the desire to go for a walk) but the object of desire, the valuable respect in which we see walking. Nevertheless, in such cases, we can at least say that we are motivated *in accordance with* some desire. If we are motivated to go for a walk because (as it seems to us) it will be pleasant to have a stroll in the sunshine, although we are not motivated *by* the desire to go for a walk, we do desire to go for a walk, and are motivated to act *in accordance with* that desire. Thus, when we are motivated to act owing to an object of desire, we desire the corresponding act, and are motivated to act in accordance with our desire. In what follows, I will continue to use 'motivated in accordance with' in a way that does not entail 'motivated by'.[21]

But then Nagel and Scanlon might rephrase their objection as follows. In some cases it seems right to say that we are motivated to act in a way that we have no desire to act. We may say we have no desire to go to the dentist for a filling, even though we recognize we must do so in order to avoid greater discomfort (and will be motivated accordingly); and we may say that we have no desire to tell a friend some bad news, even though we see we have a responsibility to do so (and will be motivated accordingly). But if we can act intentionally in ways that are in accordance with no desire we possess, then why should we think there must always be a corresponding object of desire motivating our action? Why not instead think, in such cases, that we are motivated simply by perceiving that the actions are valuable in the ways specified, or, as Scanlon would put it, by perceiving that we have reason to perform those acts?

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[20] I claim that actions that are not performed intentionally *need not* be desired, rather than *are not* desired, to allow for the possibility that someone might unintentionally perform an action that they desire to perform. In what follows, I shall freely interchange 'intentional'/ 'unintentional' with 'voluntary'/'involuntary', as rough translations of Aristotle's *ekousia/ akousia* (discussed e.g. in *NE* 3.1).

[21] Aristotle does sometimes claim that acts are due to (*dia*) some desire; e.g. *thumos* or *epithumia* (see e.g. *NE* 3.1, 1111a25, 27–8), but in view of the exceptionally clear statements in *De An.* 3.10 (433b10–11, 433a27–8) and *De Motu* 6 (700b23–9) that strictly speaking it is the object of desire that motivates us, these should presumably be taken as loose third-person ascriptions (along the lines of: 'Trevor was driven by his desire to eat the third cream cake'), not specifications of the agent's source of motivation (which would specify what Trevor sees as good about eating the third cream cake, that is, the object of desire).

Aristotle's response to this, I think, would be twofold. First, he would go on the offensive and appeal to the point about voluntariness just mentioned (cf. *De An.* 3.9, 432b14–17). If you go to the dentist for the filling, or tell the friend the bad news, and do so voluntarily, then it must be appropriate to say that you desired to do these things. Were you dragged to the dentist against your will, or did you speak the truth to your friend because you had been drugged by someone? No? Then you must have desired to perform these actions. And presumably you desired to perform them insofar as they involved avoiding the greater discomfort, or fulfilling your responsibilities. To say those actions were performed voluntarily entails that they were desired; and this at least distinguishes them from involuntary actions, which need not be.[22]

Second, Aristotle would make more conciliatory overtures. He would say that if we nonetheless want a notion of 'desire' in which it is possible for us to do things intentionally that we do not desire, his account can embrace this since, on his view:

> (T5) There is a broad notion of desire, *orexis*, and three narrow notions; *epithumia* ('appetite', 'pleasure-based desire'), *thumos* ('spirit', 'passion'), and *boulēsis* ('wish', 'rational desire') (*De An.* 2.3, 414b2; *De Motu.* 6, 700b2; *EE* 2.7, 1223a26–7; *EE* 2.10, 1225b24–6).

This means it can be true to say, on his account, that an agent acts in accordance with some *orexis* he has that he nevertheless has no *epithumia* to perform; for example Noel may intentionally act in accordance with some *orexis* he has to go jogging, even though this does not accord, say, with his (pleasure-based) *epithumia*.

In fact, Schueler and Scanlon also countenance narrow notions of desire. Schueler claims that desires in the narrow sense, which he calls 'desires proper', include things such as 'cravings, urges, wishes, hopes, yens, and the like, as well as some motivated desires', but *not* such things 'as moral or political beliefs that could appear in practical deliberation as arguing against the dictates of one's urges, cravings, or wishes' (1995: 35). On this account, in the example mentioned near the beginning of the first part of this chapter, Schueler would have a desire proper to stay at home and read a book, but only a desire in the broad sense to go to the meeting at his son's school (since that is grounded in his perceived responsibility).

However, a problem with this view is that it seems that there could be cases in which we would say we desire to act in accordance with some moral or political belief, even though we in fact act intentionally on considerations pertaining to (say) hunger, which we would avow we have no desire to follow. Consider Sally, a protester who was motivated to attend a G20 rally for perceived moral reasons. Suppose, in the middle of the afternoon, Sally suddenly realizes she has not eaten all day. She might say to herself: 'I want to continue protesting—this is what I really want to do—but I realize that if I don't get something to eat, I'm going to feel rather ill, so I'll do what I really don't want to do: break from protesting, and get something to eat.' In this case, the desire to act in accordance with the moral belief seems to be a desire proper; and the desire to eat something, by contrast, seems merely ascribable in virtue of the fact that if Sally follows her reasoning, her action was intentional.

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[22] Interestingly, Aristotle also explicitly argues the other way: that actions performed by (non-rational) desire count as voluntary; see *NE* 3.1, 1111a24ff.

Scanlon's narrow notion of desire avoids this problem. From consideration of such cases as thirst, Scanlon develops a notion of (what he calls) 'desire in the directed-attention sense'. A person has a desire in the directed-attention sense that P 'if the thought of P keeps occurring to him or her in a favourable light, that is to say, if the person's attention is directed insistently toward considerations that present themselves as counting in favour of P' (1998: 39). Scanlon notes that although this account fits well with desires for food and other appetites such as sexual desire, the definition in fact leaves open the possible objects of a desire in the directed-attention sense, since 'it is just as appropriate to say that someone with a very active conscience 'has a strong desire to do the right thing' as it is to say of a person who is utterly unscrupulous that he 'has a strong desire for personal gain' (1998: 39). This account, then, can (as it seems it should) allow that Sally has a desire proper to continue with the protest.

Aristotle's account differs from both of these. As we have seen, he recognizes three distinct desires proper. However, he differentiates these desires principally with regard to their general objects. For example, *epithumia* is pleasure-based, whereas *boulēsis* is good-based in a narrower sense of 'good' than that in which all desires (*orexeis*) are good-based, for instance reflecting considerations of health, honour, or perceived responsibilities.[23] But Aristotle's account of desires proper remains neutral on whether those desires have Scanlon's directed-attention aspect or not: one can still have a desire proper to Φ in one of these senses of desire, even if one does not have a desire in the directed-attention sense to Φ. When Sally does finally get something to eat, she will most likely be acting in accordance with a desire proper (a *boulēsis* reflecting considerations of health), even though she would really rather continue protesting. And when Schueler goes to the meeting at his son's school, he will probably, on Aristotle's account, be acting in accordance with a desire proper (a *boulēsis* reflecting his responsibilities), even though he would really rather stay at home and read a book.[24]

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[23] As this suggests, the three desires that Aristotle recognizes are themselves intended to be fairly broad categories (e.g. pleasure-based, good-based), which allow for further subdivision. I defend this account of the objects of these desires in my forthcoming book, *Aristotle on Desire*.

[24] What we avow we 'really want' might often line up with our *epithumiai*, since such avowals might well often reflect what we would find pleasurable. But this need not always be the case: we could say we 'really want' to resist eating the third piece of cake, even though we have a desire in the directed-attention sense to eat it.

Equally, just as being motivated to act in accordance with a desire in the broad sense presupposes that the agent is motivated by an object of desire in the broad sense, so too being motivated in accordance with an *epithumia*, *thumos*, or *boulēsis* presupposes that the agent is motivated by an object of desire in one of these specific senses. Thus, on Aristotle's view, it becomes true to say not just that an object of desire in the broad sense must enter into the explanation of each intentional action (as Scanlon would accept, although, as Aristotle would see it, he unduly restricts such objects to perceived reasons), but also that a full specification of this object of desire may well isolate it as being an object of desire in one of the three narrow senses as well (and this holds whether or not the agent is motivated in Scanlon's directed-attention sense).

In fact, one passage suggests that Aristotle might hold the view that a full specification of the object of desire in the broad sense *must* also isolate it as being an object of desire in one of the narrow senses. In his discussion of choice (*prohairesis*), in *EE* 2.10, Aristotle claims:

> That [*prohairesis*] is not *orexis* is clear; for then it would be either *boulēsis*, or *epithumia*, or *thumos*; for no one desires (*oregetai*) anything without undergoing one of these. (1225b24–6; cf. *De An.* 2.3, 431b2)

This entails:

> (T6) Each case of desiring in the broad sense is also a case of desiring in one of the three narrow senses.

If we pick a kind of desire proper, for example *epithumia*, it can be true to say that an agent will frequently act intentionally in a way he has no *epithumia* to act (either because he does not have an *epithumia*, or else because he acts against or in spite of an *epithumia* he possesses, as with an enkratic agent). But if T6 holds in addition to T5, it will not only be true to say of such an agent that he desires to act the way he in fact does in the broad sense of 'desire' (i.e. that he has an *orexis* to act this way), it must also be true that he has a desire in a narrow sense to act as he in fact does as well – one of the other two varieties of desire proper Aristotle recognizes. For example, if Noel has no appetite (*epithumia*) to go jogging this afternoon, but nevertheless voluntarily does so, then since he acted voluntarily he must have had an *orexis* to act that way; but, on the stronger view, since each case of desiring in the broad sense is also a case of desiring in a narrow sense, and Noel had no appetite to go jogging, he must have had either a *thumos* or a *boulēsis* to do so instead.

It was fundamental to the narrow notion of desire developed by Scanlon and Schueler that one can act in a way in which one has *no* desire proper to act at all. Indeed, this seemed to be the whole point of Schueler's discussion when he introduced the notion:

> So far as this latter sense of 'desire' is concerned, there is nothing at all to rule out my intentionally doing things I have no desire to do, or my pursuing goals I have no desire to pursue. (1995: 30–1)

Scanlon (cautiously) concurs (with respect to his own narrow notion of desire):

> Desires for food, for example, and sexual desires are marked by just this character of directed attention. And this character is generally missing in cases in which we say that a person who does something for a reason nonetheless 'has no desire to do it', as when, for example, one must tell a friend some unwelcome news. (1998: 39)

Schueler and Scanlon were trying to preserve the intuition that sometimes we want to say that agents act intentionally in ways they have no desire to.

Aristotle's account differs. If both T5 and T6 hold, then the claim that agents can act intentionally in ways they have no desire to is true only in the sense that agents can act intentionally in a way they have no desire to in one (or indeed two) of the narrow senses of desire. Nevertheless, it must be the case, on this view, that there is *some* desire in the narrow sense that they do act in accordance with.[25] But even if one holds T5 without accepting T6, that is, holds that there are several narrower objects of desire without insisting that these necessarily exhaust all the space of the object of desire in the broad sense (*orekton*), it remains true that it will frequently be the case that when one acts against a desire in the narrow sense, one will also act in accordance with another desire in the narrow sense (it just need not be the case, on this reading, that an object of desire in one of the narrow senses will *always* be isolable). So, if one objected to Aristotle's thesis that the contents of the cognitive states that motivate us should be called 'objects of desire' (*orekta*) (T2 and T4) by pointing out that the notion that each intentional action is motivated by an object of desire is true only if one uses a broad notion of 'desire' in which it is true that anything that motivates us to intentional action would count as being in accordance with a desire (see the beginning of section 2 of this chapter), Aristotle would probably make two points in reply. First, his analysis is still explanatorily significant since it serves to distinguish such actions from involuntary actions, which need not be in accordance with a desire. Second, it is not simply the case on his view that each intentional action is motivated by an object of desire in the broad sense; it will also often (or *always* if one subscribes to both T5 and T6) be motivated by an object of desire in one of the narrow senses as well, and these are senses of desire in which one can act intentionally in a way that one has no desire to act. Aristotle would claim that these two points support his contention that the contents of the cognitive states that motivate us should be called 'objects of desire', and, as I noted near the start of this part of the chapter, this would licence the claim that each action the agent performs intentionally is motivated in accordance with (though not *by*) some desire he possesses (one that corresponds to the object of desire in question). But then, given these points, it would seem reasonable for Aristotle to claim that the faculty of desire (*to orektikon*) is the part of us in virtue of which we are moved to intentional action (=T1).

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[25] Of course, the plausibility of this view hinges on it being plausible that the logical space of the object of desire in the broad sense (*orekton*) divides neatly into the objects of desire in the narrow sense (the objects of *epithumia*, *boulēsis*, and *thumos*). I offer some grounds for thinking that Aristotle's accounts of the narrow notions of desire would at least require substantial modification before we might find such a claim plausible in my forthcoming book, *Aristotle on Desire*.

3. Conclusion

Aristotle's view naturally facilitates developing an account of moral psychology in terms of desires. As I have mentioned, Aristotle holds that *epithumia* is pleasure-based, and that it contrasts with the good-based *boulēsis*. Various combinations of these desires in an agent will generate a basic moral psychology. An agent could have an *epithumia* in conflict with his *boulēsis*, and (a) intentionally act in accordance with his *epithumia* against his *boulēsis*—as with Aristotle's standard akratic agent; or (b) intentionally act in accordance with his *boulēsis* against his *epithumia*—as with Aristotle's enkratic agent; or else he might have his *boulēsis* and *epithumia* pointing in the same direction—as with virtuous, and indeed vicious, agents.

The features of Aristotle's account of desire I have considered in this chapter can be clearly seen if we contrast Scanlon's account of akrasia with Aristotle's. Scanlon claims:

> Even when desire in the directed-attention sense runs contrary to our reason (that is to say, our judgment) [...] it remains true that the motivational force of these states lies in a tendency to see some consideration as a *reason*. Akratic actions [...] are cases in which a person's rational capacities have malfunctioned, not cases in which these capacities are overmastered by something else, called desire. (1998: 40)

If I understand him correctly, Aristotle would ultimately agree that akratic actions are not cases in which one's rational capacities are overmastered by desire; if, that is, we mean by this that akratic actions involve us being motivated by a desire to act against our rational capacities. This is mistaken, on Aristotle's view, because ultimately it is not desires that motivate us, but the prospect of objects of desire.

However, on Aristotle's view, this does not entail that all cases of akrasia are instances in which the motivational force of our action stems from our taking certain considerations to count as reasons, and so does not entail that all cases of akrasia are ultimately cases in which our rational capacities have simply malfunctioned. This is because, as we saw in section 1, Aristotle thinks that objects of desire are not simply specifiable in terms of perceived reasons (if perceived reasons are identified as contents of beliefs), since objects of desire are revealed in contents grasped by *phantasia* as well as by belief, and the former are distinct from the latter. If Aristotle is right on this point, and right too to think that we (and not just non-rational animals) can have such desires, then cases of akrasia might occur in which an agent is overcome by an object of desire even though that desire does not involve taking certain considerations as reasons. Contra Scanlon's analysis, then, such cases of akrasia would not collapse into a simple rational malfunction (since it is not true that both sides of the motivational conflict involve a tendency to see some consideration as a reason); instead, the cases would be ones in which the agent's judgement is overcome by some object of desire grasped not by belief, but by a perceptual construal (*phantasia*).

And since when one is motivated by the prospect of an object of desire, one can also be said to desire the action one performs, it follows that even though it is correct to say that one did not act *owing to* the desire one possessed (as if it motivated you itself), one can nevertheless be said to act *in accordance with* that desire. Thus, although the akratic agent's rational capacities are not 'overmastered by something else called desire', the akratic agent does act against his rational capacities *in accordance with* some desire he possesses.

Furthermore, on Aristotle's account, the akratic agent may act against his rational capacities, in accordance with some desire he possesses, not just in the sense of 'desire' in which each voluntary action must be desired, but also in the sense in which it is not necessarily true that since he acted intentionally, the agent must have desired to act that way. This is because, as we saw in section 2, Aristotle thinks that there are three narrow notions of desire, in addition to the broad one, and he understands akratic agents as acting in accordance with one of them (standardly an *epithumia*) against another (standardly a *boulēsis*). Thus, when the akratic agent acts, he acts not only against some manifestation of his rational capacities, he also acts, in so doing, against the desire proper (a *boulēsis*) embodied in those rationalizations. And, in so acting, he can be truly said to act voluntarily in a way he had no desire to act, so long as 'desire' here picks out the *boulēsis* he thinks he should have followed. Hence, contrary to Scanlon, at least some akratic actions can sensibly be characterized in terms of desires, even when we accept that it is ultimately not desires (but instead their objects) that motivate us to act.

Note, too, that in order to account for enkratic actions as well, it would seem that Scanlon would have to appeal to desire. From the perspective of perceived reasons, the enkratic agent acts in the way he thinks he has most reason to do. But then since his rational capacities do not malfunction, he seems just like the virtuous agent in this respect. The only way Scanlon can mark him out, it seems, is by maintaining that he has a desire in the directed-attention sense to act in a way he judges he should not, even though he nonetheless acts as he judges he should. So to recognize the moral psychology of this character, desire might well be necessary even on the Scanlonian account.[26]

Aristotle would say that it makes perfectly good sense to describe all intentional actions as motivated in accordance with (though not by) one's desires.

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[26] Of course, Aristotle would also maintain that the desires the enkratic struggles with need not be reason-based but could simply be grounded in perception-based construals instead.

5

Phantasia in *De Motu Animalium*

Malcolm Schofield

1. Introduction

Over the last few decades there has been a great deal of sophisticated discussion of Aristotle's notion of *phantasia*, which by general consent is tricky to understand and dangerous to translate. Interpreters have mostly been preoccupied with the possibilities for seeing in *phantasia* Aristotle's means of dealing with the capacity of the senses, or of the mind in general, for interpretation or representation or (more specifically) *mis*interpretation and *mis*representation.[1] Its role specifically in the description and explanation of animal movement has been less of a focus. And there has been relatively little close and sustained engagement with Aristotle's main treatment of the topic, in *De Motu Animalium*. This is a pity. The *De Motu* presents its own fascinations and challenges; and it raises problems for some recent attempts to make sense of the function of *phantasia* in Aristotle's psychology.

I am aware of only two major discussions of *phantasia* in *De Motu*. One is that offered by Martha Nussbaum in the notes to her valuable and now standard edition (1978), and especially in the fifth of the 'interpretive essays' she includes in her book. This well-known study contains much to instruct and reward the reader. But her conviction that Aristotelian *phantasia* is a general faculty of perceptual interpretation has in my view misled her into giving an exaggerated role in her reading of *De Motu* to one particular sentence (8.702a17–19) at the expense of other relevant passages.[2] The other extended treatment is by Jean-Louis Labarrière, in the last of the three studies in his *Langage, vie politique et mouvement des animaux* (2004). His approach to *De Motu* is a powerful demonstration of the distinctively French art of *explication*

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[1] See for instance Nussbaum (1978: essay 5); Wedin (1988); Caston (1996, 1998) respectively for approaches along these lines.

[2] Stephen Everson goes so far as to complain that on Nussbaum's interpretation 'Aristotle flatly contradicts himself in the space of two pages' (Everson 1997: 164n51).

de texte, subtle, learned, ever alert to the difficulties involved in trying to force everything Aristotle says into one theoretical box. In what follows I shall rely heavily on the work of these two scholars.[3]

We need to remind ourselves briefly of the place of *De Motu* within the Aristotelian corpus, something well discussed by Nussbaum in the opening chapter of her edition. Although in most manuscripts *De Motu* is not grouped with *De Anima* or with the *Parva Naturalia*, *De Motu* seems to be conceived by Aristotle as belonging with the *Parva Naturalia* treatises: those short essays on psychological and physiological topics which amplify and sometimes develop further ideas or issues introduced more briefly in *De Anima* itself. Aristotle gives a helpful characterization of the scope of *De Sensu* and *De Memoria*, and perhaps *De Motu* too, at the beginning of *De Sensu*. He will be considering 'the most important among those phenomena that are common to soul and body... such as perception and memory and emotion and appetite and in general desire, and in addition to these pleasure and pain (these occur in pretty well all animals)' (*Sen.* 1, 436a6–11).[4]

More specifically, at the end of chapter 10 of Book 3 of *De Anima*, Aristotle comments that the physical mechanism by which desire translates into movement is something that must be considered 'among the effects common to body and soul' (a clear reference to *Parva Naturalia*), but then recapitulates a series of points made in *De Motu* in the summary he goes on to give of what conclusions such consideration will yield (*De An.* 3.10, 433b19–30).[5] *De Motu* for its part refers to *De Anima* (presumably *De An.* 3.3 in particular) for a treatment of the differences between *phantasia*, perception, and intellect (*nous*) as discriminatory or judgemental capacities (*De Motu* 6, 700b18–22).[6] Aristotle appears to presuppose the reading order *De Anima*, *De Motu*.[7] At any rate, the

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[3] Part 3 of Lorenz (2006) makes significant use of *De Motu* material at various points (particularly in chapter 6), but doesn't present an overall consolidated view of its treatment of *phantasia*.

[4] The final sentence of *De Motu* puts it in a sequence comprising first *Parts of Animals* and then *De Anima*, *De Somno et Vigilia*, and *De Memoria*.

[5] See further Nussbaum (1978: 9). I think it most likely that Aristotle inserted this passage in its present form into the text of *De An.* 3.10 after *De Motu* was written (if indeed *De Motu* was the later composition).

[6] The difficulties involved in trying to understand and translate *nous* are well explored in Burnyeat (2008). I shall follow him in rendering it as 'intellect' in *De An.* 3.10 and *De Motu* (these are not texts he discusses there), mostly so that the reader may be aware of what Greek expression is involved. But in 3.10 Aristotle says explicitly: 'All *nous* is correct' (433a26), a thesis that is neither true nor readily translatable unless it there means something like the understanding intellect achieves when it exercises its knowledge. In *De Motu*, by contrast, Aristotle seems to take a more relaxed approach to *nous*. At any rate he is often prepared to substitute *noēsis*, 'thinking', in the relevant contexts, without any obvious implication that this is necessarily correct thinking (as indeed already at *De An.* 3.10, 433a10), and he uses the corresponding verb *noein* without any commitment to its delivering truth or understanding (e.g. *MA* 7, 701a7, 8, 702a16).

[7] For the notion of a reading order, see Burnyeat (2004: 19–22).

De Motu text refers to distinctions that 'have been discussed' elsewhere, and does not recapitulate them, whereas the *De Anima* passage talks of something 'to be considered' and offers a summary, as though the full treatment is still to come. This sequence fits the general pattern of the relationship between *De Anima* and *Parva Naturalia*.

Charles Kahn (1996) has argued that some of the *Parva Naturalia* treatises revise as well as clarify the account of their topics given in *De Anima*, but with *De Motu* I can find only clarification and expansion. If the principal role of *phantasia* in *De Motu* is very different from its chief function in *De An.* 3.10–11, that is not because Aristotle is now altering his understanding of the concept, but because he has a different agenda, for which he needs to invoke a different kind of exercise of *phantasia.* I shall argue that whereas *De An.* 3.10–11 is mainly concerned with explaining why and how practical thinking—calculation (*logismos*)—causes movement only in the service of desire, and introduces *phantasia* into the story principally in that connection, *De Motu* is in the end more interested (despite the famous discussion of the practical syllogism in Ch.7, 701a7–25) in the cognitive activity that triggers movement when the animal *doesn't* engage in calculation. Focusing on this latter kind of case enables Aristotle to concentrate on just those psychological phenomena that are crucial for the account of the way the soul moves the body that he is going to work out in the later chapters of *De Motu.* Not coincidentally it also enables him to make that account one that works as easily and obviously for non-rational as for rational animals, unlike the treatment of calculative reason in *De An.* 3.10–11, which would require adjustment or variation to deal with the behaviour of non-rational animals—a requirement Aristotle is clearly aware of there, without however getting very far into addressing.

2. *Phantasia* in calculation and in cognition

In the theory of animal movement presented in *De An.* 3.10–11, *phantasia* figures principally as analogous to or (in the end) a kind of practical thinking or calculation which enable the animal to translate desire into behaviour. Desires always have a goal (*telos*). Thought or imagination (with the non-rational animals there is only *phantasia,* not thinking or calculation) is needed to work out or 'see' how to achieve the goal: '*Nous* here is what calculates for the sake of something and is practical', and 'the object of desire is the *archē* governing practical *nous*' (3.10, 433a14, 15–16). Similarly 'when *phantasia* causes movement, it does not do so without desire' (3.10, 433a20–1).

When he sums up at the end of 3.10, Aristotle has recourse to an unexpected and rather vague formula: an animal cannot be 'appetitive without *phantasia*' (433b28–9). He adds at once (433b29): 'All *phantasia* is either calculative or sense-perceptive'. It looks as though he means—in line with his earlier arguments—that desire would be ineffective unless the animal can in its imagination either work out rationally or else just 'see' how to achieve its goal. *Phantasia* is evidently being treated now as the generic term for the thinking input into movement. Presumably what motivates Aristotle to do this is recognition that for a general theory of animal movement, which will work for non-rational as well as rational animals, expressions like 'thinking' (*noēsis*) and 'intellect' (*nous*) are in the end not the most appropriate. It is significant in this connection that he goes on at once to explain that 'sense-perceptive' *phantasia* is what the other animals have (3.10, 433b29–30).[8]

At the beginning of chapter 11 Aristotle ventilates a worry as to whether 'incomplete' animals—animals that have no sensory faculties other than touch—have *phantasia* at all. Thereafter, however, he is back to practical thinking, the initial and dominant preoccupation of chapter 10. 'Calculative' *phantasia* is now called 'deliberative', and associated with working out whether to do this or that (434a7–10). In the language used at the beginning of chapter 10, this is practical *nous* at work, but Aristotle has rephrased his thesis in terms that reflect the theorizing of chapters 7 and 8 of Book 3, which holds that the soul never thinks except with an image (*phantasma*) (3.7, 431a16–17).

With the *De Motu* treatment of *phantasia*, we are despite first appearances in very different territory. 'We see', says Aristotle at the start of chapter 6 (700b17–19), 'that the movers of the animal are thought and sense-perception (*aisthēsis*) and *phantasia* and choice and wish and emotion and appetite.[9] And all of these can be reduced to intellect and desire.' But more fundamental than these movers are the things for the sake of which they cause movement: the *first* mover is the *object* of desire and thought (i.e. practical thought), viz. the good or apparent good. It is what primarily initiates movement, as the goal for whose sake an animal moves (6, 700b23–32).

This sounds rather like the beginning of *De An.* 3.10, particularly the opening sentence: 'There are apparently these two movers, either desire or *nous*, if one treats *phantasia* as a form of thinking' (433a9–10). But I want to draw attention to three important differences. First, in *De Motu* Aristotle recognises that both of the two general categories embrace a greater variety of psychological phenomena than are admitted to the discussion in *De An.* 3.10. Second, for the rest of *De Motu* 6–7 Aristotle continues to work consistently with a *triad* in his explanations of the cognitive input into animal behaviour: sense-perception, *phantasia*, intellect/thinking. In these chapters *phantasia* is not privileged in the account at any point, and sense-perception takes its place alongside the other two. Thirdly, *phantasia* here is not calculative or deliberative *phantasia*, but a form of immediate apprehension that something is so, comparable to sense-perception or intellectual judgement.

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[8] I do not find Aristotle making any use of the notion of 'sense-perceptive *phantasia*' in *De Motu*.

[9] Nussbaum's text omits 'and sense-perception' and 'and emotion': for discussion see Nussbaum (1978: 333; also 1976: 143–4). But the sequel shows indisputably that Aristotle intended to include them in his lists. Even if the manuscripts which do read these words (the group she designates b_2) are correcting, not reproducing, the archetype, it is hard to believe that the omission is Aristotle's fault: the copyist who produced the archetype will be the culprit. See further the excellent remarks of Lorenz (2006: 130n19), who observes *inter alia* that the b_2 group do sometimes preserve independent correct readings.

Particularly worth noting is the inclusion of sense-perception as well as *phantasia* and intellect/thinking among the sources of cognitive input into movement. Aristotle offers an explanation for putting them on the list (6, 700b19–22):

> For both *phantasia* and sense-perception hold the same place as intellect, since all are concerned with making discriminations/judgements (*kritika*)[10]—though they differ from each other in ways we have discussed elsewhere [i.e. *De An.* 3.3].

That sense-perception should be identified as one of the cognitive faculties whose operation typically launches animal movement should come as no surprise to readers of *De Anima*. This is exactly what one would have expected from *De An.* 2.6 and 3.3, where sense-perception is treated as the standard way in which animals make a success of registering their environment, contrasted in 3.3 with the non-paradigmatic mode of *phantasia*.

Aristotle is specific in the passage from chapter 6 quoted above (*De Motu* 6, 700b19–22) that *phantasia* is a discriminatory or judgemental faculty, as such comparable in some sense with sense-perception and intellect (see Labarrière 2004: 184–5; Lorenz 2006: 119, 132–5, and 192–3). On my understanding of *De An.* 3.3, 428a1–5 Aristotle has already claimed as much in *De Anima*.[11] Other scholars have taken a different view of that passage. Michael Wedin's fundamental contention about *phantasia* is that it is not a cognitive or discriminative faculty in its own right, but a capability for [re]presentation which subserves genuine faculties (1988: ch. 2). So unsurprisingly he favours an account of 428a1–5 which does *not* imply that it is a 'faculty or disposition in virtue of which we judge and are true or false' (1988: 46–8). He does not tell us how he would deal with our *De Motu* passage.[12] Gerard Watson, by contrast, whose account of *phantasia* resembles Wedin's at this point, does cite the *De Motu* text. He says that it does not imply that *phantasia* is like sense-perception or thought in 'expressing a judgement' which is true or false (Watson 1982: 106n10 [= Watson 1988: 23n2]). But this gloss on 700b19–22 cannot survive a reading of the next chapter of *De Motu*, where Aristotle discusses how it is that thought and the other cognitive capacities may result in movement. We need scarcely do more than translate *MA* 7, 701a32–3:

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[10] Aristotle gives an explicit account of what gives sense-perception its ability by virtue of its status as a mean condition to discriminate proper sensibles (*De An.* 2.11, 424a2–15; cf. 3.2, 426b8–427a16, *Somn.* 2, 455a12–26).

[11] See Schofield 1978: 127–8, where I argue against Ross's emendation of the text, adding *âra* at 428a3 to turn Aristotle's statement into a question. On my reading, Aristotle thinks he has by this stage in the chapter said enough about *phantasia* to show that it is a capacity or disposition in virtue of which we judge, i.e. achieve truth or falsehood. What remains is to consider whether it is to be assimilated to any other such capacity or disposition. After arguing his way through the options Aristotle concludes that it isn't (428b9). Nonetheless in the causal account that follows it will transpire that, because it is a change that is brought into being by the activity of sense-perception and resembles perception, what has *phantasia* 'effects and is affected by many things, and is both true and false' (428b10–17). In other words, that is how *phantasia* constitutes a judgemental capacity in virtue of which we achieve truth or falsehood, via dependence on and similarity to sense-perception, which is not, of course, to claim or imply that *phantasia* only figures in our experience as something on the basis of which we judge things—truly or falsely—to be the case. We can dream or imagine things without taking them for real.

> 'I have to drink', says appetite. '*This* is something to drink', says sense-perception or *phantasia* or intellect. Straight off he drinks.

Phantasia expresses judgements exactly as sense-perception and intellect do. If the propositional content of what *phantasia* is here represented as saying were to be more strictly expressed as: 'This appears to be drink', the 'appears' (*phainetai*) operative here is not a merely phenomenological or non-epistemic 'appears', but a cognitive or epistemic one—would-be epistemic, at any rate, for of course it might be wrong (though in this instance Aristotle isn't envisaging that there is error). It is hard even to conceive how a philosopher thoroughly wedded to treating *phainetai* or *phantasia* phenomenologically as a matter of policy or theory could ever have written a sentence like the one at 701a32–3 even as a one-off aberration.

By *phantasia* here Aristotle must have in mind something like visualization.[13] Although he is thinking in the first instance of human agents in this stretch of chapter 7 of *De Motu*, we might apply his example to the case where an animal which feels thirsty visualizes something *not* in its immediate field of sensory awareness, for example, a thirsty dog imagining (truly or falsely) its bowl of water in the next room. Of the water it visualizes the dog says to itself (as it were): '*This* is something to drink', and then straight off goes to the next room and—given that the visualisation is true—drinks.[14] We might contrast a thirsty human agent who, *thinking* of water in the kitchen, *actually* says to herself or himself: '*This* is something to drink'. Both cases contrast in turn with the situation where a thirsty agent can see drink right there and says (or 'says'): '*This* is something to drink'.

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[12] See for example Labarrière (2004: 238n2), Bolton (2005: 240) for criticism of Wedin on this count. Wedin's entire book is with two exceptions devoid of references to *De Motu*.

[13] 'Visualization' is too restrictive if taken as meaning just picturing (although Aristotle's own etymology prompts the assumption: *De An*. 3.3, 429a2–4). It must be envisaged to include 'as-it-were' sniffing, tasting, touching, hearing, as appropriate. In his treatises on dreams Aristotle shows himself thoroughly well aware of the point: see e.g. *Insomn*. 3, 461a25–b3, 462a15–28, *Div per Somn*. 1, 462b11–21.

[14] Interestingly different are the cases Aristotle discusses at *NE* 3.10, 1118a16–26 (drawn to my attention by Michael Pakaluk), where the hare's scent allows a dog, or a cow's mooing a lion, to perceive its prey. Here there is actual sense-perception (smell, hearing) of the victims in question, even though they are not seen—this is not mere *phantasia*.

A division of labour between sense-perception, *phantasia*, and thinking assumed in *De Motu* 6 and 7 is exactly what chapter 3 of *De Anima* should have prepared us to expect. At the very end of that chapter Aristotle writes as follows (*De An.* 3.3, 429a4–8):

> Because *phantasiai* persist and are similar to sense-perceptions, animals do many things in virtue of them: some because they do not have understanding, such as the beasts; others because the understanding is sometimes veiled by emotion or illness or sleep, such as humans.

Notice first that the reason why *phantasiai* are said to be capable of motivating behaviour is their similarity to sense-perceptions. This presupposes the idea that sense-perception itself is capable of triggering movement, as confirmed by *De Motu* 6 and 7.[15] No doubt Aristotle thinks sense-perception as such is what triggers a high proportion of all animal behaviour, human or otherwise. Secondly, it is clearly not assumed that *all* animal movement is prompted by *phantasia* as its triggering cognition. The 'many things' done in virtue of *phantasia* are implicitly contrasted with those performed as a result of sense-perception, on one side, and intellect, on the other. Third, Aristotle hardly conveys the impression that *phantasia* provides a particularly secure basis for behaviour. In the case of humans, the suggestion is that it is the poor substitute for intellect which dreamers and hallucinators find themselves relying on. They are accordingly often deceived (so *De Insomniis*).[16] In the case of the other animals *phantasia* is described in similarly negative terms: it is simply what they have to make do with instead of intellect. Aristotle implies that this is a defect, without spelling out why.[17]

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[15] And as is assumed elsewhere in *De Anima*: for example, 3.7, 431a8–17, where it is noteworthy that talk of *phantasmata* is introduced only in connection with the initiation of action by thought on the analogy of perception. So—similarly—3.7, 431b2–9.

[16] See my discussion of the *De Insomniis* material in Schofield 1978: 118–23.

[17] Wedin (1988: 49) points out e.g. that whereas sense-perception and thought are introduced by Aristotle in cognitive terms, *phantasia* is designated merely as 'that in virtue of which we say that a *phantasma* occurs to us' (*De An.* 3.3.428a1–2). He takes this as evidence that *phantasia* is not a discriminative faculty in its own right, but only a capacity that subserves genuine cognitive faculties. But the right conclusion to draw is that, *qua* cognitive faculty, *phantasia* is secondary, defective, and otherwise unsatisfactory, although of course it can sometimes get things right. The same conclusion is in my view the appropriate response to some of Wedin's other arguments in the same direction.

3. Translating desire into movement

'How does it happen', Aristotle asks at the beginning of chapter 7 of *De Motu*, 'that when people think, sometimes they act, sometimes they don't act, or move, but sometimes not?' The question is met by an account of the way a practical syllogism differs from a theoretical one. For behaviour to result from what Aristotle broadly calls thought, that thought requires two premises of different sorts: one representing 'the good', that is, something desirable; the other what he calls 'the possible', that is, a means for attaining the desirable (7.701a23–5). In other words, we need a desiderative and a cognitive premise, the one representing the end, the other the means. When these are the focus of thought, the conclusion that results from asserting them is an action, in fact often immediate action. The immediacy is nicely illustrated by one of the examples Aristotle goes on to provide: 'No human should walk right now; I am a human'—so right away I stay put. The notion of the 'possible' premise is better conveyed by the cloak example. Here the desiderative premise is 'I need a covering'; and after some internal debate throwing up intermediate premises, the person doing the reasoning reaches the possible premise: for example, 'I need to start cutting this bit of material' (immediately, Aristotle imagines once again, but this time it seems a gratuitous assumption).

For his strategic purpose of explaining how the soul causes the body to move, however, Aristotle considers it useful to take an example where we don't need to do any actual cogitation or calculation. This can happen when we are so focused already on what we want (in the example, a drink) that we are 'active' with sense-perception or *phantasia* or intellect *with regard to* the object of our desire. That is, our cognitive activity is already harnessed to a specific objective (7.701a29–30). When that is the case, then once we achieve success on the cognitive front (in the example, we see or imagine or think of something drinkable), behaviour follows *immediately*. We do not need to spend any time fitting our discovery into a plan of action now to be worked out (7.701a26–8). It is already tailor-made for the action prescribed by desire: 'the activity of the desire takes the place of questioning or thinking' (7.701a31–2). Thus (*MA* 7.701a32–3):

> 'I have to drink', says appetite. '*This* is something to drink', says sense-perception or *phantasia* or intellect. Straight off he drinks.

Aristotle now extracts a moral: 'This is how animals are impelled to movement and action. The ultimate [i.e. most immediate] cause of movement is desire, and this comes about either through sense-perception or through *phantasia* and intellect; and when they desire to act, sometimes it is from appetite or spirit and sometimes from rational want that they make or act'

(7.701a33–b1).[18] This is evidently an attempt to generalize from cases like the drink example, where the importance of the operation of desire is much more salient than in (for instance) cogitation about clothing, although Aristotle's concluding remark about the different kinds of desire indicates that the point he wants to make is valid for that sort of case too. It is not that desire isn't operative there also (it is of course articulated in a desiderative premise like: 'I need a covering'), but that it doesn't at any point 'take the place of questioning or thinking' (7.701a31) as appetite does in the drink example.

What does Aristotle mean when he says that desire 'comes about . . . through'[19] sense-perception or through *phantasia* and thinking? The Loeb editor evidently took the idea to be that the desire which causes movement is *enabled to take place* by sense-perception and so on ('the carrying-out of his desire' is his translation). To recast the point in terms once more of the practical syllogism, the desire articulated by the premise expressing the good *takes effect* through the means supplied by the cognitive information expressed in the other premise—in short, the premise indicating 'the possible'. With the words 'this comes about . . . through', Aristotle isn't trying to say anything about how the desire gets formed in the first place, only about how, once formed and operational, it gets translated into behaviour.

This interpretation has the drawback that it makes nothing in particular of the drink example. That example seems designed to suggest that when we are thirsty, the sight or imagining or thought: '*This* is something to drink' strikes us because our cognitive faculties are already honed and directed to serve our desire, and so at once and without any cogitation at all it makes appetite specific. No longer is it a matter of: 'I need a drink', but instead: 'I need *this* drink'. In other words, sense-perception or *phantasia* or thought shapes a desire that is on that account now determinate, ready to function at once as the *immediate* cause of movement—whereas the less specific desire for something to drink articulated in the desiderative premise is only a more remote cause: not the actual trigger. That, then, seems to be the sense in which desire 'comes about . . . through' sense-perception or through *phantasia* and thinking.[20]

The relevant desire—the highly determinate desire which triggers movement—is prompted and indeed shaped or (to use the expression Aristotle will subsequently employ: 8, 702a17–19) 'prepared' by sense-perception, *phantasia*, or thought.[21] The drink example makes that immediately apparent. But the theory also holds good in more cogitative cases. Thus in the cloak example, unless the desire for a covering articulated in the desiderative premise is eventually sustained and translated into some very specific thought-generated desire (e.g. wanting to start cutting this material right now), nothing will happen. In this case most of the thinking in which we engage at intermediate stages in our deliberation *is not* honed to serve actual occurrent desire, but may consist in (or at least depend on) exploration of different possible ways of getting from A to B.

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[18] I follow Nussbaum's excision of *orexin ē* (MSS.) at 701b1.

[19] The opacity of this form of words is noted by Labarrière (2004: 213n1, with further discussion at 233–9).

[20] In *De An.* 3.10, 433b10–13 Aristotle says that it is by being thought of or imagined that the object of desire operates on desire as moved mover. I think he would continue to agree with this in *De Motu*, provided that as a generalization it is taken as a remark that applies to the less specific desire (the more remote cause) articulated in the desiderative premise. The more specific desire to drink *this* can be triggered by sense-perception also.

In the rest of chapter 7 Aristotle turns to consider how a psychological phenomenon like sense-perception or *phantasia* or thinking *can* have physiological effects. The topic is already foreshadowed at the end of chapter 6, where he says: 'The animal moves and progresses through desire or choice, *when some alteration has taken place in accordance with sense-perception or phantasia*' (6.701a4–6). The reference to sense-perception and *phantasia* clearly anticipates the role they play (as indicated in the first part of chapter 7) in shaping desire into something determinate enough to take effect. But the reference to alteration (*alloiōsis*) anticipates the physiological story Aristotle will begin to tell in the second part of the chapter—the first instalment in the long account that follows (through to the end of chapter 10) of the physics of animal movement.

Before we start looking at the physiological theory Aristotle develops, it is important to notice the formula he employs in talking about the cognitive inputs into desire: sense-perception or *phantasia*, sense-perception or *phantasia* and thinking. The triad sense-perception or *phantasia* or thinking now seems to be turning into just two alternatives.[22] The obvious explanation is that Aristotle has in mind the point that thinking only represents its object through *phantasia*. If a human agent thinks: '*This* is something to drink' (remembering the bottle in the refrigerator), that thought requires *phantasia* for its formulation—a *phantasma* of drink (cf. e.g. *De An.* 3.7, 431a14–17, 431b2–9). Thinking: '*This* is something to drink' is not the *same* as visualizing: '*This* is something to drink'. Non-human animals can do the one but not the other. Nonetheless, thinking requires visualization (*De Mem.* 1, 449b31–450a5):

> It is not possible to think without *phantasma*. For the same effect occurs in thinking as in drawing a diagram. In the latter case, though we do not make any use of the fact that the size of the triangle is determinate, we nonetheless draw it with a determinate size. And

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[21] For some subtle discussion of the question whether, and if so when, the formulae 'comes about... through' and 'prepares' do the same work, see Labarrière (2004: 235–40). On my view when Aristotle says at 7, 701a35–6 that desire 'comes about... through' sense-perception or through *phantasia* and thinking, he means that they cause the desire for drink to take the specific form it does (i.e. desire for *this* drink), and in that sense 'prepare' desire: they shape the particular determinate form it assumes, and so make it capable of activating movement.

[22] As noted by Labarrière (2004: 214, 235).

> similarly, someone who is thinking, even if he is not thinking of something with a size, places something with a size before his eyes, but thinks of it not as having a size.[23]

So Aristotle can simplify the account he will give of the physiological effects of desire-triggering cognition by concentrating on a disjunction: sense-perception or *phantasia* (6, 701a5–6), sense-perception or *phantasia* and thinking (7, 701a36).

The theory elaborated from the middle of chapter 7 to the end of chapter 10 is complex and detailed, and it has sometimes been thought not easy to grasp how it all fits together. The core of the theory is worked out in a sequence of argument starting at a break in chapter 8 (at 702a21) and finishing near the end of chapter 10 (703a28). Its basic thesis is that the origin of motion supplied by the movement-generating soul must be at the centre of the physical system (9, 702b15–17), where—to recur to an analogy used earlier with a slightly different application—like a rudder in a ship that shifts a fraction, it will cause 'great and numerous differences' from a distance (7, 701b24–8). Central position is what you would expect, according to Aristotle, because the faculty of sense-perception is as a matter of contingent fact located there (in the heart, he will mention in chapter 11: 703b23–4). So (9, 702b21–5):

> When, because of sense-perception, the area around the origin is altered and changed, the adjacent parts change too, expanding and contracting, so that due to these things animal movement necessarily occurs.

There is no mention here of the capacity of *phantasia*, too, to trigger the translation of desire into movement. To have included the point at this juncture might have made the argument over-complicated. Aristotle would have had to include some reference to his views about the identity in difference of the faculties of sense-perception and *phantasia* (as summarized e.g. at *Insomn.* 1, 459a14–22), to make the point that the central location of the former entails that of the latter. Perhaps he did not see a way of doing that which was at once brisk and intelligible. Nor does he mention desire. A more complete statement of his view would presumably have to consist in saying that sense-perception or *phantasia* will prompt and prepare desire in some determinate form—and the consequences described will follow.[24]

In the sequel Aristotle in fact goes on to argue a priori, from premises derived from mechanics, that at the centre of the body there *must* be something that moves by being moved, viz. the soul, or rather its vehicle (9, 702b25–703a3); more specifically—the deferred moment arrives when it is appropriate to mention it—that mover is desire (10, 703a3–4, referring back to 6, 700b23–701a1, where what moves desire as moved mover is said to be its object: the good). However, in an ensouled body, the moved mover must itself take a material form, and that is identified by Aristotle as what he calls 'connate *pneuma*', a postulated physical substance that has just the capacity for expansion and contraction needed to push and pull the limbs, presumably through its effect on the sinews (10, 703a5–28; cf. 7, 701b9–10). With this brief account of connate *pneuma* Aristotle decides that the main work of the treatise is accomplished. He can finish with a short peroration (10, 703a28–b2), followed by an appendix on involuntary movements in chapter 11.

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[23] Thus the human agent thinking: '*This* is something to drink' has a thought of some generality, but what he visualizes will be something specific, such as a bottle of orange juice.

[24] Nussbaum (1978: 155) seems to find Aristotle's omission of any explicit reference to desire at 702b21–5 disconcerting. But he is apparently deferring that until a more appropriate point in the exposition (9, 702b25–30, 703a4).

4. The causal role of *phantasia*

There is in fact no mention of *phantasia* in chapters 9 and 10. As we have seen, sense-perception is what gets mentioned at the relevant point in the exposition. It is in the preliminaries to the presentation of the main theory set out there that Aristotle includes reference to *phantasia*. I now turn to the relevant passages.

The argument of the second part of chapter 7 starts as though it is going to proceed at once to demonstrate that psychological events can initiate animal movement (7, 701b2–3):

> The movement of animals is like that of automatic puppets, which are set moving when a small motion occurs.

It ends up delivering something less immediately ambitious: showing that a small change in origin (a thought, for example) can produce a considerable difference *within* the body—for example, effects such as 'blushing, pallor, and shuddering, trembling, and their opposites' (7, 701b30–2; this is the original context of the rudder analogy, 701b26–8). But this less ambitious interim conclusion moves us forward in the right direction.

Having introduced puppets (and then a child's cart) to set up an analogy, Aristotle in fact notices a dissimilarity with the bodies of animals, which seems to be what diverts the argument to its less ambitious destination. With puppets and carts there is no alteration (*alloiōsis*) of the rigid components, whereas 'in the animal the same component has the capacity to become both larger and smaller, and to change shapes, as the parts expand because of heat and contract again because of cold, and get altered' (7, 701b13–16). These expansions, contractions and alterations are what the rest of the chapter mostly discusses.

The material that particularly interests us now makes its appearance. Aristotle writes (7, 701b16–24):

> The alterations are caused by *phantasiai* and sense-perceptions and thoughts. For sense-perceptions have their existence in their own right, on account of being alterations of a sort,[25] while *phantasia* and thinking have the power of actual things. For the form conceived of the pleasant or frightening[26] is in fact just like each of the actual things. That is why people shudder and are frightened just thinking of something. All of these are affections and alterations. But when there are alterations in the body some parts become larger, some smaller.

Once again we meet the familiar triad—sense-perception, *phantasia*, thinking—reduced as elsewhere to the dyad—sense-perception or *phantasia* and thinking. But though mention of these clearly echoes their role in the account of the cognitive input triggering movement given in the first part of chapter 7 (and compare what is said of sense-perception in chapter 9, 702b20–5, discussed in section 3 above), the changes for which they are made responsible are (as we have been noticing) not initiation of locomotion as such (through the effects of desire), but alteration in the body. Moreover, the psychological aspect of the psychophysical reaction prompted by *phantasia* and thinking—representing 'the pleasant or fearful' as they do in the cases Aristotle imagines—is emotion, something notable by its absence in the discussion so far, and particularly in the practical syllogism passage.

The point being made about *phantasia* and thinking is fairly straightforward. You might have supposed that thinking or imagining something pleasant or frightening can only be *just* a thought or a piece of imagining, without any power to affect anything. But in fact the form conceived in the thought or visualization has a causal power similar to the power the actual object represented in the form would have were one to be confronted with it directly. What proves this is that we get the same sorts of psychophysical reactions: shuddering, trembling, blushing, going pale, and so on. Aristotle puts the basic point even more clearly in chapter 11, when discussing why we get involuntary movements, for example of the heart or penis: 'Thinking and *phantasia*, as was said earlier, present the things that produce the effects—for they present the forms of the things that are capable of producing them' (11.703b18–20).[27]

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[25] For discussion of the Greek of this clause see Burnyeat (2002: 78n132). He rightly focuses on *euthus*, which he takes to have the force here 'directly', 'in their own right', I think again correctly. But like other translators, he makes nothing of the existential force of *huparchousin*.

[26] I follow Nussbaum's text at this point, omitting the words 'of the hot or cold or' which occur in the manuscripts before 'the pleasant or fearful'. For an attempt to defend the manuscript text, see for example Burnyeat (2002: 80n138).

[27] The brief comment about sense-perceptions at 701b17–18 is harder to understand. One might have been expecting that Aristotle would be wanting to claim that sense-perceptions, too, have notable causal power, with effects similar to those of thought or *phantasia* (cf. 9.702b20–5). I think that is indeed his point, although it is conveyed more by implication than explicit assertion. I take the clue to the meaning to lie in the contrast with *phantasia* and thinking (marked by a *men…de* antithesis). *Phantasia* and thinking have causal efficacy because their content is as good as the actual physical thing they represent. Sense-perceptions have it because they actually exist as physical processes (not just physical, of course) in their

This discussion of *phantasia* and thinking sets up Aristotle's treatment in the first section of chapter 8 of how desire—or a particular kind of desire—is formed, and of why once formed it takes effect in animal movement almost immediately. To summarize 8, 701b33–702a15, *phantasia* or thought of something pleasant or painful automatically shapes a desire to pursue it or run away from it (as the case may be). Now, pleasurable and painful bodily affections, sexual excitement, feelings of confidence or fear (and memory and anticipation of these experiences)—all are generally accompanied by chilling or heating throughout the body or in some part of it (whether we notice or not). But chilling and heating can harden or soften the tissue at the joints of the limbs. Where the active and passive elements in the system function properly relative to each other, the body is primed for an immediate response of pursuit or flight, once desire decides movement is appropriate.

'That', says Aristotle (8.702a15–17) 'is why at virtually the same moment an animal thinks: "I have to get going" and gets going—unless something else impedes it.' In the recapitulation of the explanation he now offers, *phantasia* becomes the key to the whole process he has been describing. The organic parts are prepared by the affections, the affections by desire, desire by *phantasia*. But *phantasia* may occur either because one is having a thought or because of sense-perception. It is because what is passive in these processes is naturally relative to what is active that movement is simultaneous and rapid (8, 702a17–21). The examples of affections he has given earlier suggest the following illustration of the claim about the origins of *phantasia*. If someone reports that there is a poisonous snake somewhere in the house, the thought of that may involve me, for example, in visualizing its venomous fangs sinking into me, with chilling effects on my physical system. But seeing it sleeping in the corner of the room I am actually in may similarly cause me to visualize it attacking me with its fangs, with the same chilling effects. Actually seeing the fangs bared will prompt the visualization even more effectively.

In commenting in her edition of *De Motu* on the way that at 8, 702a17–19 organic parts are said to be prepared by affections, they by desire, desire by *phantasia*, with its origins thinking or sense-perception, Nussbaum suggested that Aristotle was now giving us his preferred general account of *phantasia*. More specifically, (i) Aristotle is here offering 'a more careful and schematic account' than in the practical syllogism passage of 'the steps that lead to action'; and (ii) in doing so, he 'gives *phantasia* a broader role' than he had there (Nussbaum 1978: 233). The implication is that Aristotle has now dropped the

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own right. On the much-debated issue of whether such *alloiōsis* is or involves a material process I therefore find myself in agreement so far as this passage goes with e.g. Nussbaum and Putnam (1992: 37–41), Labarrière (2004: 227–31)—I cannot make sense of the argument on any other basis. Burnyeat (2002: 78–80) gives an alternative account of it, which does not have the same implication, but which does not advert to the key emphasis on 'the power of actual things'.

contrast between sense-perception and *phantasia* (and thought) as alternative forms of cognitive input. Only via *phantasia,* it now transpires, can the deliverances of the senses be presented to the animal 'in such a way that it can be moved to act' (233). Since sense-perception doesn't typically involve visualization, *phantasia* must be broadly interpreted as indicating the way some object appears (*phainetai*) to the animal: 'what it sees things *as*' (268).

This seems to me most implausible. As Labarrière observes, nothing in *De Motu* so far has prepared us to expect that *phantasia* will acquire a central role in all animal behaviour of the kind Nussbaum posits (Labarrière 2004: 235). And as I hope to have shown, Aristotle's account of the relation between desire and cognitive input in animal psychology, and of the way these are translated into physical movement, is an intricate and deeply considered theoretical construction sustained (after the introductory chapter 6) in a single complex train of argument that develops throughout the entire sequence constituted by chapter 7–10.[28] To pluck out a single short passage from the middle of chapter 8 and privilege an interpretation of that which renders much of the rest at best provisional and at worst misleading is not good method. Is there a viable alternative explanation available of what Aristotle is doing in that passage?

What is needed is closer attention to the context in which at 8, 702a18–19 he makes the claim that desire is prepared by *phantasia.* To recapitulate, it occurs at the end of the stretch of argument that begins with the puppet analogy at 7, 701b2. The alterations in the animal body that are meant to be illuminated by the analogy are said to be caused by sense-perceptions, on the one hand, and by *phantasiai* and thoughts, on the other. Aristotle argues that here too a small initial alteration can produce 'great and numerous differences some way away' (7, 701b25–6). With that established he is ready to move to his full-scale explanation of what happens in animal movement. Chapter 8 begins with the reminder (701b33–4) 'The origin of movement is the object of pursuit and avoidance in the sphere of action.' And he then launches the theory which will conclude with the statement (702a15–16): 'That is why at virtually the same moment an animal thinks: "I have to get going" and gets going.'

Aristotle begins his exposition of the theory by saying (701b34–5): 'Necessarily the thought and *phantasia* of these [objects of pursuit and avoidance] are accompanied by heating and chilling.' He does not mention sense-perception here. Why not? It seems unlikely that he has dropped the idea that sense-perception too can be responsible for movement. That thesis has been maintained and where needed finessed throughout chapter 6 and 7. Nor of course does he claim here that thought and *phantasia* of objects of pursuit and avoidance are the *only* ways relevant to explaining animal movement in which those objects can impact on cognition. The reason for not mentioning sense-perception must be that Aristotle has decided to present his account of how cognition sets up changes in the body which result in animal movement by taking thought and *phantasia* as his *examples* of cognition—without in the least meaning now to rule out sense-perception as the other relevant example.

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[28] Nussbaum's description of 702a17–19 as offering 'a more careful and schematic account' ought in itself to ring a warning bell: 'careful' and 'schematic' are uneasy bedfellows.

It is not hard to see why he should have elected to focus here on *phantasia* and thought. He will substantiate the claim that heating and chilling accompany them by observing (8, 702a2–5): 'Feelings of confidence, fears, sexual excitement, and other bodily affections, painful and pleasant, are accompanied by heating or chilling, whether in the whole of the body or in some part of it.' And he will add in 'memories and anticipations, which use things of that sort as images': these have the same effect 'to a lesser or greater degree' (702a5–7). It seems clear that Aristotle thinks that in some of these phenomena he can find readily acceptable instances of cognitive experiences that involve heating or chilling—and they are phenomena (feelings of confidence, fears, anticipations, memories) which are all forms of thought or *phantasia.* We can legitimately suppose that he would indeed want to make the same claims about heating and chilling with regard to sense-perceptions (no doubt 'to a lesser degree'). But obvious examples would presumably have been harder to come up with.

At the end of the first section of chapter 8 Aristotle sums up (702a17–19): 'The affections suitably prepare the organic parts, desire the affections, *phantasia* desire. But *phantasia* may occur either because one is having a thought or because of sense-perception.' We can now see that this summary is not to be read as *De Motu*'s final considered general statement of the cognitive basis of animal movement. Aristotle is not claiming that *all* desire is prepared by *phantasia* (there are in his view some desires that are prepared by sense-perceptions). He is simply reminding us of the place that *phantasia* occupies in the particular kind of causal chain he has been describing in the immediately preceding passage—and adding a comment on what may prompt *phantasia* (conceived as something like visualization) in its turn.[29]

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[29] Many years ago Myles Burnyeat kindly gave me some comments on an ancestor of the present chapter. For detailed comments on my penultimate draft I am indebted to Victor Caston, Jean-Louis Labarrière, and in particular the editors.

6

Aristotle on the Ends of Deliberation

Anthony Price

1. A puzzling sentence

Some of the things that Aristotle says do not lose their capacity to surprise us. Take the following remark within his discussion of *phronêsis* (practical wisdom) in *AE* B.12: 'Virtue [that is, of character] makes the target (*skopos*) right, *phronêsis* the things towards it' (1144a7–9). This is my text.[1]

The modern reader is reminded of Hume's pronouncement: 'Reason is, and ought only to be the slave of the passions, and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them' (*A Treatise of Human Nature*, II. iii.3). In *NE* 1.13, Aristotle introduced a distinction that structures much of his *Ethics*, between a rational part of the soul whose virtues are intellectual, and a non-rational (or derivatively rational) part whose virtues are 'ethical' (*êthikos*) in a sense that connects with passions and appetites. So the present statement might propose a division of labour: what an agent happens to want constitutes his ends (so that these will be good if his desires are in a good state); reason then calculates how those ends are to be achieved. Such calculation is neutral in that it assesses alternatives as more or less efficacious, but does not evaluate them ethically. Ends may be good or bad; means are effective or ineffective.

理性 (intelle ual)

非理性 (激情和欲望)

Yet such a conception cannot be what Aristotle intends, and has rarely (and never recently) been ascribed to him.[2] Two quotations, one specific, one general, may illustrate this. Specifically, virtue of character was defined in *NE* 2.6 as 'a state of character concerned with choice, lying in a mean relative to us, this being defined by a logos, that is, by that by which the *phronimos* would define it' (1106b36–1107a2). Generally, 'Desire is grounded by opinion, rather than opinion by desire; for thinking is the starting point' (*archê*, *Meta.* 12.7, 1072a29–30). Furthermore, within *NE* 1.13, we meet the converse of Hume's metaphor: it tells us that desire should *obey* reason (1102b26–8, 30–1; see *EE* 2.1, 1219b28–31, 1220a1–2).[3]

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[1] For reasons that will become clear, I here follow Kenny (1978) in referring to the three 'common books', which constitute at once *NE* books 5 to 7 and *EE* books 4 to 6, as *AE* A to C. *AE* stands for *Aristotelian Ethics*.

I have learnt much from comments by the editors, and could doubtless have learned more. In particular, I shall be lucky if the reader follows me along any of the paths down which Michael Pakaluk has warned me not to go.

[2] It took me by surprise when this reading was imputed to me by Bridget Clarke (2005: 223–4). The attribution was unwarranted, and indeed counter-indicated, by the paper of mine to which she was responding (see my 2005b: 208–9); it was certainly not earned by any divergences from John McDowell that were implicit there, and will here be explicit.

A better—though not, I shall argue, the best—response to the lines 1144a7–9 is to defuse them. We have to do justice to both halves of this apparently surprising claim: virtue of character makes the target right, *phronêsis* the things that yield it. Though Aristotle, I believe, holds it to be essential to chosen action that it is performed for the sake of *eudaimonia* or acting well, nothing guarantees that an action that is, as we would say, intentional will also be *chosen* in that privileged sense. In particular, acratic action is not to be explained as an attempt to act well. Hence the agent who is to act on choice needs to be oriented as he acts towards acting well, and must not be distracted or seduced by an end with which he does not, as we might say, *identify*. Moreover, it is mark of choice that comes of virtue—or at least of would-be virtue—that it aims at the mean (*to meson*, *NE* 2.9, 1109a22–4), and makes its end the fine or noble (*to kalon*, 3.7, 1115b12–13; 4.1, 1120a23–4). Ideally both parts of the soul, rational and non-rational, take the noble as their target (3.12, 1119b15–16). But 'the mean' and 'the noble' are so far determinables in search of determination. How is what realizes them to be identified from occasion to occasion? Perhaps by the exercise of *phronêsis*. But then its role is not simply to calculate means to some concrete end, but to decide what *counts* as achieving the mean, and nobility, in the circumstances.[4]

One may relate this to *De An.* 3.10 (433a18–20): 'The object of desire moves, and because of this thought moves, because the object of desire is its starting point' (see *AE* B.2, 1139a35–6). Practical thinking is of a kind to be for the sake both of the starting point of deliberation, which is a desired goal, and of the terminus of deliberation, which is action. It is a '*logos* for the sake of something' (a32–3), and 'for the sake of something and practical' (a36); it exercises the *nous*

Nonetheless, I am indebted to her for alerting me to how much was left unsaid in Price (2005b), and even (2005a). She stands to this essay, *mutato mutando*, as the *patēr tou logou* (Plato, *Symposium* 177d5).

[3] It is true that we read in *NE 10* 8, 'The starting points of *phronēsis* are in accordance with the ethical virtues' (1178a17–18); yet Aristotle continues (a18–19), 'And the rightness of the ethical virtues is in accordance with *phronēsis*.' I shall be concerned to do justice to *both* these theses.

[4] Pakaluk asks a good question of this view (which is not mine): 'If what virtue contributes is so general, it's hard to see why there is more than one moral virtue: Why isn't there simply one virtue of character, "aspiration to the noble" (wherever found)?' Yet it might be replied that we have different virtues where there are different temptations to be distracted from the noble.

that 'calculates for the sake of something and is practical' (*De An.* 3 10, 433a14). This indeed subordinates thinking that is essentially practical to an initial object of desire; yet it permits the defusing strategy in leaving open how determinate this is, and hence how much work in specifying it is left to *phronêsis*.

Arguably accommodable also is a later sentence in *AE* B.12: 'Virtue makes choice (*prohairesis*) right, but what is naturally done for the sake of that falls under not virtue, but another capacity' (1144a20–2). It is true that virtue cannot make choice right by keeping it focused upon *eudaimonia*, for there *is* no choice unless *eudaimonia* is the goal. However, this does not guarantee orientation towards the mean and the noble—such as is lacking in those who espouse a low conception of *eudaimonia* in 'choosing' (*prohairoumenoi*) the life of cattle (*NE* 1.5, 1095b20). Even if this might *also* be achieved by a state of character that was high-minded or self-deceived and yet gravely misdirected (say by a systematically skewed locating of the mean), as also by states of self-control (*enkrateia*) or lack of self-control (*akrasia*) that have good ends but pursue them conflictedly, it is secured by virtue.

However, it remains a surprise to the reader of the *NE* that choice is here associated with the agent's end, rather than his means. Despite that passing mention in 1.5 of a *prohairesis* of a way of life, nothing was said in the course of the *NE*'s discussion of choice and wish (*boulēsis*) to take back the distinction that wish is rather of the end, choice of the means (3.2, 1111b26–8). What may be a qualification to that was at best implicit: it is remarked, near the start of 3.2, that choice 'is thought to be most closely bound up with virtue and to discriminate characters better than actions do' (1111b5–6), and *one* way of making sense of that is to suppose that our ends are better revealed in our choices than in our actions.[5] Only in *EE* 2.11 is this made explicitly intelligible by reference not to the object, but to the end, of choice (1228a1–4); and we shall see that *EE* 2.10–11 throw open the possibility of a reading less anodyne, but not less Aristotelian.

Also to be rejected, in my view, *as an interpretation of our sentence* (*AE* B.12, 1144a7–9), is a different and more fertile conception that relates it to other things said within *AE* B and C. Take the following passage (*AE* B.5, 1140b11–20):

> This is why we call temperance (*sōphrosunē*) by this name; we imply that it preserves (*sōzousa*) one's *phronēsis*. Now what it preserves is a judgement... about what is to be done. For the starting points of things to be done are that for the sake of which they are to be done. But to the man who has been corrupted by pleasure or pain there fails to appear

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[5] Only one way; for *EE* 2.10, 1227b5–11 instead link choice and character through the connection between virtue and pleasure upon which Aristotle expatiates in *EE* 2.4 and *NE* 2.3. Yet it is confirmed by the 'ignorance in the choice' that is a mark of wickedness, and relates to ends and not means (*NE* 3.1, 1110b31–1111a1).

> the starting point, or that one must for sake of *this* or because of *this* select and do everything; for vice corrupts the starting point.

That could be the background to a later remark within *AE* B.12 (in itself ambivalent): 'Wickedness perverts us and causes us to be deceived about the starting points of action' (1144a34–6). Isn't it then plausible that a bad character should not only corrupt a good judgement already made, but also generate a bad one? And might this not prompt corresponding claims about the value of good character? Why should good practical judgements not be both *preserved* by the retention of a good character, and *generated* by its acquisition?

This may be the lesson of a passage in *AE* C.8,1151a15–19:

> Virtue and wickedness respectively preserve and corrupt the starting point, and in actions the end is the starting point, as the hypotheses are in mathematics. For neither in that case is it the *logos* that has the capacity to teach the starting points, nor is it here; rather, it is natural or habituated virtue <that can teach (?)> right opinion about the starting point.

Unfortunately, there is a problem here: can Aristotle really hold that virtue, whether natural or habituated, *teaches* anything? Typically, one teaches what one has been—or might have been—taught; and the opening of *NE* 2.1 distinguishes intellectual virtue from virtue of character partly on the ground that the former arises from teaching, whereas the latter arises from habituation (1103a14–18). Consequently, I incline to suppose that Aristotle's expression is loose and condensed, and that he really means, more vaguely, that the relation of virtue to 'right opinion about the starting point' is *analogous* to teaching; we might understand, instead, 'It is natural or habituated virtue that <is the source of> right opinion about the starting point.'[6] This yields just what suits the proposed reading of 1144a7–9: out of the emergence of habituated from natural virtue (see *AE* B.13, 1144b3–17) arises also 'right opinion about the starting point'; though opinion is never identical to desire (for many of the same reasons that exclude the identity of opinion and choice, *NE* 3.2, 1111b33–1112a8), the training of desire is the education of practical opinion. What makes a practical opinion good, as an opinion, is its truth (1112a7; *AE*

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[6] Such a condensation of style may be characteristic of Aristotle. I take a debated sentence elsewhere as follows: 'Acts that are foreseen may be chosen by calculation and a *logos*, whereas sudden actions must <occur> in accordance with one's state of character' (*NE* 3.8, 1117a20–2), preferring to supply 'occur' than to understand 'be chosen.' Indeed, there is good reason to object that not all choices are *in fact* preceded by deliberation; but this appears to be an objection *to Aristotle* (see *NE* 3.2, 1112a15–16; 3 3, 1113a11–12; *AE* A.8, 1135b19–25; *EE* 2.8, 1224a4; 2.10, 1226b6–9, 14–15, 32–6). For a discussion of this, see note 38 below.

Compare too an awkward sentence in *AE* B 13: 'The one (that is, virtue) <makes> the end, whereas the other (that is, *phronēsis*) makes one do the things towards the end' (1145a5–6). Here we must evidently understand 'makes' in the sense of 'fixes' or 'selects', and not (as grammar suggests) 'makes one do'; see its occurrence at *EE* 2 11, 1227b23 (but compare note 12 below).

B.2, 1139a27–9); what *gives* an agent good practical opinions is the development of his character.

It has long been the teaching of David Wiggins and John McDowell that the ethical education of desire and motivation is part and parcel of the acquisition of ethical concepts and the discrimination of ethical qualities.[7] McDowell comments upon 1144a7–9 as follows (1998b: 31–2):

> What determines the content of a virtuous person's correct conception of the end is not an exercise of the practical intellect, but rather the moulding of his motivational propensities in upbringing... This need not be a quasi-Humean thought, because there is no reason why a state whose content is so determined cannot still be an intellectual excellence. The claim is that it is not practical wisdom that *makes it the case* that the goal is the right one. This leaves intact the thesis that *having* the right goal is inseparable from the ability to identify what is to be done occasion by occasion, which is what practical wisdom is.

This is not the place to try to assess the inherent attractions of such a view, either within the interpretation of Aristotle, or within a contemporary moral psychology that is equally concerned to avoid the Scylla of Hume's subjectivism and the Charybdis of Kant's rationalism. How credible is it as a reading of 1144a7–9? We could not read into those spare lines *very much* of McDowell's view—not that he need be reading into them more than whatever kernel of his own position they can plausibly be supposed to contain. It should rather give us pause that they are hardly a felicitous expression of his core thought. What he needs us to be told is that successful practical thinking is a *product* of motivational moulding, and yet an *operation* of *phronēsis*. What 1144a7–9 tell us is that there is a certain relation expressed by *poiein* which connects virtue to the end *(ton skopon)*, and *phronēsis* to the way or means (*ta pros touton*). McDowell's insight may well, I think, be Aristotelian; it is not so happily read into 1144a7–9.

2. A Eudemian passage

I have now discussed two possible ways of making sense of my primary text (*AE* B.12, 1144a7–9), both arguably Aristotelian, but neither fully satisfactory for the task. I believe that these lines (as also the following a20–2) would leave much indeterminate if it were not for an extended passage in the *EE* upon which they are better taken to be dependent.[8] Since the connection has been neglected, I make no apology for quoting extensively from *EE* 2.11 (1227b12–1228a2, after the translation by Woods, 1992):

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[7] See the essays in Wiggins (2002a) (a later edition of a collection that first came out in 1987), McDowell (1998) (collecting essays over many years).

[8] If this is right, attempts to make sense of the *AE* B.12 sentences that make no reference to that passage (such as McDowell, 1996: §6, and Clarke, 2005: 226, n. 31) could only succeed by luck. This section amounts to an argument that at least this chapter of the *AE* belongs within the *EE* better than within the *NE*. If it succeeds, it says something in favour of Kenny's view

> We must say whether virtue makes choice free from error and the end correct, in such a way that one chooses with a view to the thing that one should, or whether, as some people think, <it makes> the *logos* <correct>... For it is possible for the goal to be right, but for error to occur in what lies on the way to the goal; it is possible also for the goal to be mistaken, but for the things leading to it to be correct, and also for neither to be correct. Does virtue make the goal correct, or what leads to it? We assert that it is the goal, because of this there is no *sullogismos* or *logos*... So, if either the *logos* or, if not that, virtue, is the cause of every correctness, it must be because of virtue that the end is correct, though not the things leading to it. The thing-for-the-sake-of-which is the end. For every choice is *of* something and *for the sake of* something. The mean is the-thing-for-the-sake-of-which, of which virtue is the cause, by choosing for the sake of that. However, choice is not of that, but of things for the sake of it. It belongs to another capacity to hit upon all that must be done for the sake of the end; but that the end of the choice is correct—of this virtue is the cause.

An indication that Aristotle had *EE* 2.11 (though also 2.10) in mind when writing *AE* B.12 is that those chapters both anticipate and explicate the later remark, itself unexpected, that 'virtue makes choice right' (1144a20). In *EE* 2.11 he introduces choice and goal together, saying 'Virtue makes choice free from error and the end correct', but then distinguishes choice from the end of choice: 'One chooses with a view to the thing that one should' (1227b14), and 'Choice is not of that [the thing-for-the-sake-of-which], but of things for the sake of it' (b38–9). It is importantly explicit in the *EE* (as it is not equally within the *NE*) that the relation between choosing an act and aiming thereby at a further goal is not contingent, but internal to the very nature of choice: choice is at once (a) '*of* something' and (b) '*for the sake of* something' (b37), where (a) signifies the action chosen, and (b) the further end that the action is intended to serve (see 2.10, 1226a11–13). Thus *AE* B.12 depends upon *EE* 2.11 (and 2.10) for the confirmation of Anthony Kenny's gloss upon 1144a20, which runs 'The rightness which Aristotle here has in mind is that of being a choice made for the right end' (1979: 103).[9]

(1978) that the *EE* was the original home of the *AE* (though the truth could well be more complex).

[9] For reference back to *EE* 2.11, see already Stewart (1892: ii 100–1)—which is particularly striking as he attributes the *EE* to Eudemus. As I noted in § 1, this dual conception of choice is one way of making sense of the statement in *NE* 3.2 that 'choice is thought to be most closely bound up with virtue' (1111b5–6, see *EE* 2.11, 1228a1–4); and 3.8 conjoins 'choice and that-for-the-sake-of which' (*prohairesin kai to hou heneka*, 1117a5; see *tēn prohairesin kai to telos orthon*, *EE* 2.11, 1227b13). Yet the *NE* sheds no explicit light on 1144a20. See also *AE* C.10, 1152a14 and 17, where I take *prohairesis* to be of an end. Good in defence of the dual conception is Anscombe (2005: 154).

Aristotle applies his dual conception of choice, as related to an act *and* its end, in two ways. Suppose, as in an example of his (*An. Po.* 1.24, 85b30–2), *A* goes to a certain place in order to pay a debt—and all this for the sake of acting justly and well. Then he has a concrete end to fit his circumstances: paying the debt. He also has an abstract end that guides his reasoning without sufficing to get it going: acting justly and well. In *EE* 2.11, Aristotle cites as concrete ends curing a patient and being fit (1227b25–8), and as an abstract end achieving the mean (b37–8). He very likely has *both* in mind when he remarks, 'It is from his choosing that we judge what sort of person someone is' (1228a2–3). For it marks the virtuous agent that he aims at the mean, and selects a goal wisely with a view to that.[10] When we read, 'Virtue makes choice free from error and the end correct in such a way that one chooses with a view to the things that one should' (1227b13–14), we may think of both kinds of end. A different abstract end makes an appearance at 3.1, 1230a27–33 (which refers back, no doubt to 2.11): being related to choice, virtue 'makes us select everything for the sake of something, and this is the that-for-the-sake-of-which, the fine' (a28–9).[11]

Most important for us within *EE* 2.11 is that it states *why* it must be virtue of character that plays a certain role: 'Does virtue make the target or the things towards it? We lay down that it makes the target, for the reason that of this there is neither *sullogismos* nor *logismos*' (1227b22–5).[12] Thus it *has* to be virtue that sets up the target, since there is no *sullogismos* or *logos* that can establish it, presumably as the conclusion of an inference. This is compatible with the anodyne alternative with which I began. That held that there can be no good choice unless the agent is oriented by virtue of character towards nobility and the mean. For Aristotle might well hold that good deliberation must take those as its targets, whereas no deliberation can adopt them as means to an end. However, it is speculative to make sense of *AE* B.12 *only* by reference to two ends that it doesn't specify; and I shall later (at the start of § 4) cite evidence, from *EE* 2 and *AE* B, that Aristotle envisages starting points for deliberation that are variable and context-dependent. We would need evidence that, in *AE* B.12, he

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[10] Of course, we need to take both together. A man may fail to be virtuous either because he is uninterested in the mean (perhaps he simply lets himself go), or because he mislocates it. The same is true of the fine or noble (*to kalon*, 3.1, 1230a29).

[11] Though the dual conception of choice is not explicit in the *NE*, we are reminded of it when we read there of 'choice and that-for-the-sake-of which' (3.8, 1117a5). See note 5.

[12] Woods (1992) adopts Rackham's suggestion that we add an <*orthon*> after *ton skopon* (1227b23), so that the question becomes whether virtue makes *right* the target, or the things towards it. This is tempting in that it brings 1227b23–4 closer to *AE* B.12, 1144a7–9; but what grounds it must be rather that it fits the focus of the preceding lines (note *orthon*, 1227b13, b20, *hēmartēsthai*, b21, *orthōs echein*, b22). Without the addition, one can compare *AE* B. 13, 1145a5–6 (see n. 6 above). I do not think that the issue affects my discussion in this section.

only has in mind certain ends that are characteristic of virtuous agents, and for them invariable.[13]

What of McDowell's more interesting interpretation (imperfectly though it may fit *AE* B.12, 1144a7–9)? Recall again a later sentence: in practical matters, it is not 'the *logos*', but 'natural or habituated virtue', that (I proposed) is the *source* of 'right opinion about the starting point' (*AE* C.8, 1151a17–19). *EE* 2.11 could be read as grounding that: *since* there is 'neither *sullogismos* nor *logos*' of the starting point, it *follows* that it cannot be 'the *logos*' from which an agent's 'right opinion' about it originates; rather, the cause of that must be what McDowell calls 'the moulding of his motivational propensities in upbringing' (1998b: 31). So understood, the inference is surely valid, and yet there is an infelicity. On McDowell's view, *even if* it was here a *logos* 'that teaches the starting points' (1151a17–18), it would still be true that the source of the agent's ability to make that *logos* his own, and fully to accept it, both in thought and in action, would be the motivational moulding. This infelicity is avoided if Aristotle's meaning is rather that, since there is no *logos* of a practical starting point, what defines or fixes it is the exercise of an excellence not of reason but of character. To confirm that this is his view, we need to discuss another aspect of McDowell's position.

3. Deliberation and deduction

The moral psychology shared by Wiggins and McDowell seeks to make consistent sense of a thesis that is at once plausible and problematic. Suppose we say the following: only the agent whose desires are properly oriented can hope to grasp what in human life is truly worth while. This implies that there is a *truth* about what in human life is worth while. Yet if this implication is to be more than hollow, there must be a cognitive point of view, accessible to human beings, from which that truth can be ascertained. Hence, even if the condition that constitutes possession of that point of view can only be achieved through the development of desire, it must itself be a cognitive state, involving the correct application of concepts that have a sense which yields them an objectively determinable extension.

Yet how can the possession of a right practical starting point be a cognitive state if there is no *sullogismos* or *logos* by which it might be derived? If there is no reasoning by which the correct starting point may be discriminated from a wrong one, can 'right' and 'correct' here be more than mere 'epithets of honour'

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[13] This point is parallel to one that everyone now makes about *NE* 3 (1112b11–16)—see § 3 below—and which also applies to *EE* 2.10, 1226b9–10; 2.11, 1227b25–8. When Aristotle writes that virtue makes the end right, or that deliberation assumes ends and explores means, we should think of the ends that present themselves as starting points of deliberation from occasion to occasion, and not of ends whose content is such that they can only enter into deliberation by being taken as given.

(in Hobbes's unforgettable phrase)? Does it not now look as if motivational moulding is requisite for what we count as 'right' desiring for the simpler and less welcome reason that there is here no genuinely cognitive discrimination between getting things right or wrong? McDowell rejects this scepticism on Aristotle's behalf (as also on his own). He holds that Aristotelian *phronēsis* is exercised in a kind of deliberation that bridges 'a version of the gap between end and action that figures in the account of deliberation in general, with doing well as the end' (1996: 24). He rejects any argument that this is impossible in the absence of *sullogismos* or *logismos* as 'a deductivistic prejudice about the very idea of applying a universal' (ibid.). He holds that there can be such a thing as 'deliberation with a view to doing well' even though there can be no initial spelling out of the connotations of 'doing well' in a determinate set of propositions that would lend itself to deductive application from context to context.[14] Instead, the primary task of *phronēsis* is to deliberate towards a *specification* of what constitutes acting well in the context; only thereafter might one *deduce* how to enact the specification.

On this conception, it is a prior task of deliberation to lead one from an abstract and determinable target to a determinate target that is applicable and acceptable in context. Now it is easy to suppose at first that such a conception is excluded by Aristotle's insistence in *NE* 3.3 that deliberation is not of ends: 'We deliberate not about ends but about means. For the doctor does not deliberate whether he shall heal, nor an orator whether he shall persuade, nor a statesman whether he shall produce law and order, nor does anyone else deliberate about his end. They assume the end and consider how and by what means it is to be attained' (1112b11–16). Yet any such inference can be contested by making a typically Aristotelian distinction: for a doctor, to deliberate *qua* doctor is for him to take it as given that he is to cure (if he can), and to wonder only *how* to cure; it is perfectly possible for a man to deliberate whether, say, to become a doctor, or whether to do some doctoring this afternoon—but he is then deliberating not *as a doctor*, but *as a man*. It is true that not every end is open to deliberation even if one is deliberating simply as a man: deliberation cannot determine whether one should aim at acting well, for to deliberate *is* to think practically not just about how to act, but about how to act well. Yet what *counts* in context as acting well may be a proper object of deliberation. So Wiggins concluded an early and influential rejection of any easy inference from 3.3 as follows: 'It is not in any case excluded that... a man may seek by deliberation to make more specific and more practically determinate that generalized *telos* of *eudaimonia* which is instinct in his human condition' (2002a: 223).[15]

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[14] Such would be the 'Grand End' conception identified and rejected by Broadie. I have twice followed her lead: see Price (2005a: 266–9) and (2005b: § 2).

[15] See (up to a point) *EE* 1.2, 1214b6–11. However, the deliberation must be relativized to an actual or possible context of action (though in cases of contingency planning this may be

Wiggins and McDowell thus agree that there can be a grasp of the concept of *eudaimonia*, acquired through motivational moulding and practical experience, that is not articulable in a set of propositions that would lend themselves to deductively valid inference, but is exercised in practical and ethical deliberations ('sans arguties, sans syllogismes, sans déductions',[16] as Baudelaire writes in a different context) that decide what *counts* as acting well in context before any technical question can arise about which instrumental means may be efficacious. Take an instance of action-explanation to which I alluded earlier in the *An. Po.* (1.24, 85b27–35): 'With what purpose did he come? In order to get the money. And that in order to pay back what he owed; and that in order not to act unjustly.' How to get some money, or how to pay back some debt, may be technical questions, about which one might depend on the advice of one's financial advisor, and to which there may be plainly verifiable answers. Whether one must now pay back a debt if one is not to count as acting unjustly may be an easy question (if the contract specified a firm date), or a matter of judgement. Even in the second case there may still be a true answer, though one that is yielded by a non-deductive style of deliberation.

For us, the primary question has to be: is this conception Aristotelian? An initial query arises directly from *EE* 2.11: if, as is proposed, such deliberation is an exercise of *phronēsis*, how can Aristotle infer from the absence of formal inference—which I take to be the connotation of *sullogismos* and *logismos*—that the target is set by virtue of character, in contrast to 'another capacity' (1227b40), evidently *phronēsis*, which would provide a *logos* (b34–5)? Surely Aristotle is inferring that, because the target is not set by *sullogismos* or *logismos*, it is *not* set by *phronēsis*, but by virtue of character.

Aristotle's texts contain a further obstacle: they repeatedly connect deliberation and *sullogismos*.[17] Thus we have just read in the *EE*, 'Choice is neither

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neither perceived nor predicted, see n. 38 below). Otherwise we are certainly unfaithful to Aristotle. One indication of this is that he identifies the product of deliberation with an object of *prohairesis*, and not merely of a relatively determinate *boulēsis*. This is why *prohairesis* can safely be defined as 'desire of things in one's power reached through deliberation' (*NE* 3.3, 1113a10–11; *EE* 2.10, 1226b17)—so long as the 'deliberation' is for the sake of acting well (unlike that of *AE* B.9, 1142b18–20), and the 'desire' is decisive (see a4–5). We can only speak of a *prohairesis* once the agent has resolved, in relation to a particular or specific practical context, all uncertainties of practicability and desirability (which needn't wait until the final minute determination of the means, see *NE* 3.3, 1112b26–7); to count as a *prohairesis*, a reflective desire must be closer to particular action than a general resolution to respect certain reasons, or to make future choices within a defined range. Another indication is that it is *phronēsis*, and nothing less practical (see *AE* C.2, 1146a8), that correctly specifies the end (B.9, 1142b32–3). There is no successful grasp of a specification of *eudaimonia* that does not involve an ability to respond correctly to the demands and opportunities of *particular* situations.

[16] 'Without quibbles, without syllogisms, without deductions'.

[17] This is detailed in Kenny (1979: 113n2; 118). Other references are provided by Loening (1967: 20 n.10) and Müller (1982: 115n77). *AE* B.11, 1143a33–b5 associates *phronēsis* (which B.9 has linked to *euboulia*, or excellence in deliberation) with 'proofs' (*apodeixeis*) and 'the other premise.'

simply wish nor opinion, but opinion *and* desire, whenever these follow as a conclusion (*sumperanthōsin*) out of deliberation' (2.10, 1227a3–5). Talk of a practical 'conclusion' (*sumperasma*) being yielded by premises (*protaseis*) is recurrent in the *De Motu* (7, 701a12, a20, a23, a26–7), and the *AE* (3.3, 1147a25–8). In the *AE* we read of 'practical syllogisms' (more literally, 'syllogisms of things to be done', 2 12, 1144a31–2), which display *phronēsis* if the end is good.[18] One failure of excellence in deliberation (*euboulia*) involves a 'false syllogism' and 'false middle term' (2.9, 1142b22–6). *Euboulia* is 'not without a *logos*' (b12). *De Anima* 3 11 associates deliberation with *logismos* and *sullogismos* (terms that appear at 434a8, a11), offering a quasi-deductive schema with one 'universal' and one 'particular premise ('such a man must do such and such, and this is such and such and I am such a man', 3 11, 434a17–19). Most explicit and succinct is a statement in the *De Memoria*: 'Deliberation is a kind of inference' (*sullogismos tis*, 2, 453a13–14). There are, to my knowledge, no comparable textual indications of a mode of deliberation unconnected with syllogistic reasoning.

4. A dual approach

An immediate lesson is to be cautious about talk of 'deductivistic prejudice' (McDowell, 1996: 24): Aristotle, the creator of formal syllogistic, may be subject to it himself. Little yet follows positively about how a practical syllogism operates.[19] Aristotle himself likes to compare the starting points of practical reasoning to the 'hypotheses' posited by mathematicians (see *AE* C.8, 1151a16–18; *EE* 2.10, 1227a7–11). This comparison (for which see also *NE* 3.3, 1112b20–3) suggests that practical starting points should, like mathematical hypotheses, be more than the thinnest of abstractions (such as the bare notion of 'nobility'). And miscellaneous evidence confirms starting points of some specificity. Thus the general statement 'Those who have no target before them are not in a position to deliberate' (*EE* 2.10, 1226b29–30; see 1227a6–7) comes immediately after the specific example 'The carrying of goods is a cause of walking if it is for the sake of that that a man walks' (*EE* 2.10, 1226b28–9).[20] And then the same general claim, 'First there will be that because of which, i.e. that for whose sake', is explicitly illustrated: 'for example wealth or pleasure or whatever else of that kind happens to be that for whose sake' (1227a13–15). Here the examples are kinds of good (wealth or pleasure) for which an agent may *happen* to act on some occasion—unlike nobility and 'acting well', which are standing ends for the virtuous agent.

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[18] Kenny (1979: 111–12) contests the syntax, construing it instead to this effect: 'Those syllogisms which contain the starting-points of acts to be done run "since the end, or the highest good, is such and such".' However, the clause 'since the end, or the highest good, is such and such' cannot constitute the whole syllogism (see the two premises of *De An.* 3.11, 434a17–19), but only the universal premise, which is its starting point.

[19] I address this difficult question in Price (2008), though I would now give a partly different answer.

[20] Equally, the recommendation at *EE* I.2, 1214b6–14 that 'everyone who can live according to his own choice should adopt some target for the noble life, whether it be honour or reputation or wealth or cultivation' (however that is to be understood—see Price 2005b: 194–6) envisages alternative *skopoi* that are schematic but to a degree specific.

Consider too a passage in the *AE* (B.12, 1144a31–6):

> Practical syllogisms have a starting point, viz. "since the end, or what is best, is such-and-such", whatever that may be (let it for the sake of argument be whatever you like). This is only apparent to the good man; for wickedness perverts us and causes us to be deceived about the starting points of action.

The 'starting points of action' are explicitly *plural*.[21] It is indicated that they vary not only between good and vicious agents, but also, for any given virtuous agent, from occasion to occasion (see Price 2005b: 196–7). So we should think of goods such as wealth and pleasure that are often but not always properly pursuable: the vicious agent pursues them too often, the virtuous agent only on occasions when they can be pursued commendably.

To this it may be objected that Aristotle emphasizes that the *phronimos* aims at nothing less than acting and living well, as here: 'It is thought to be a mark of a *phronimos* to be able to deliberate well about what is good and expedient for himself, not in some particular respect, for example about what sorts of things conduce to health or to strength, but about what sorts of things conduce to the good life in general' (*AE* B.5, 1140a25–8; see B 7, 1141b12–14, and B.9, 1142b28–33). The question is how to read such passages correctly. The right approach, I believe, is to accept that 'those who have no target before them are not in a position to deliberate' (*EE* 2.10, 1226b29–30), and to ascribe the role of being a target to humanly significant but in themselves indecisive ends of the kinds that Aristotle indicates in general remarks about deliberation, and exemplifies (though often implicitly) in his examples of practical syllogisms.[22] We need to ascribe to the deliberator a dual approach that involves two features that I have characterized elsewhere as 'a focus upon a limited and accessible target, and an openness to whatever considerations come into play' (Price, 2005b: 198). Here I follow Sarah Broadie, who explains, 'The practical agent differs not by being focused on another special sort of good that is special because unrestricted and categorically demanding, but by being focused on a restricted good (not always the same one, either) with a focus that sets no limit on the considerations that could affect which way he goes with regard to that good or to the points of view that might make a difference' (1991: 211). This involves distinguishing 'the defining end', which is acting well (*eupraxia*), from 'the end premised in deliberation', which is whatever it may be (such as health or wealth). The agent starts from some restricted end, to which the situation prompts his attention, and asks how he can achieve it in context, with a sensitivity—required by his aspiration to *act well*—not just to the efficacity of available means, but to their acceptability in the circumstances. Broadie offers a nice analogy (1991: 236): 'It may be wise to acknowledge that our identified target is no more than the tip of some iceberg, but it does not follow that the entire iceberg is our target, or that we can approach a submerged whole otherwise than by setting our sights on what we can see of it.'

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[21] This has been noted independently by Tuozzo (1991: 203), and Broadie and Rowe (2002: 359). Compare a much later remark: 'The starting points of *phronēsis* are according to the virtues of character' (*NE* 10.8, 1178a17–18).

[22] Unfortunately, Aristotle appears to give us examples of practical syllogisms just in order to bring out the close relation between thought and action, and not to clarify the proper starting-points of deliberation. Of the examples that are given within his treatment of acrasia, I take one to relate to health (dry food, *AE* C.3, 1147a5–7), one perhaps to pleasure but most likely to nutrition (tasting sweet things, 1147a29–31—see Price, 2008: 156–7), and one, again, to health, or perhaps etiquette (not tasting, a31–4). The examples in *MA* 7 are equally skeletal: one plainly relates to health (walking, 701a13–14, see a27–8), one perhaps to etiquette (not walking now, a14–15), two to securing material needs (building a house, making a cloak, a16–22).

A famously opaque passage of the *AE* can both shed light upon this proposal, and receive light from it. Keeping fairly close to Ross's translation (1925), we have this (2.11, 1143b2–5): 'The *nous* involved in practical reasonings grasps the last and variable fact, i.e. the minor premise. For these variable facts are the starting points for the apprehension of the end, since the universal is grasped from the particulars; of these therefore we must have perception, and this perception is *nous*.'[23] I take 'the universal' to be whatever universal premise is prompted by the perceived particulars. Despite—or rather, *because of*—my disagreement with him about the scope of deliberation, I find Wiggins's gloss entirely apt (2002b: 236): 'For here, in the capacity to find the right feature and form a practical syllogism, resides the understanding of the reason for performing an action, or its end. For the major premise and the generalizable concern that comes with it arise from this perception of something particular. So one must have an appreciation or perception of the particular, and my name for this is intuitive reason' (i.e. *nous*). Aristotle contrasts *nous* with *logos* (1143a36–b1). In the case of practical reasoning, it is *nous*, and not *logos*, that prompts the starting point appropriate in the circumstances. (Neither, therefore, given Aristotle's association of *logismos* and deliberation, is it deliberation.) And it is striking that *nous* is here equated with a kind of perception: we must not conceive it as a kind of reasoning that takes perceptual data as its raw materials.[24] The ethically educated agent sees some feature of his situation as salient in a way that prompts him to select an act, say of providing help, as his goal. The question *how* best to provide help in the circumstances sets his practical deliberation in train.[25]

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[23] I shall repeat some, but not all, of the relevant points in Price (2005b: 208–9; 211 n28). At 1143b5, I follow D. J. Allan's annotation in his copy of the *NE* in reading *to katholou* (singular), following two manuscripts, in place of Bywater's *ta katholou* (plural). See *AE* A.7, 1135a5–8 for a distinction between *to katholou* (which I would also rather read, with one ms., than *ta katholou*), which is an act or action-type, and *ta kath'hekasta*, which there are action-tokens.

[24] Woods (1986: 159) infers that 'it involves a distortion of Aristotle's thought to hold that he thought that anything like induction has application in the moral sphere'. We may find this

When Aristotle contrasts virtue of character with *phronēsis*, it is with deliberation in mind. He does not oppose ethical virtue to *nous*. Rightly, on my reading; for the salience of some situational feature is evidently not independent of the agent's repertory of standing concerns. We should not think of his way of apprehending the situation as independent of the concerns that he brings to it. I have elsewhere (Price, 2005a: 273–4) cited and glossed a difficult sentence from *De An.* 3 7: 'To perceive then is like bare asserting or thinking; but when the object is pleasant or painful, the soul makes a sort of affirmation or negation, and pursues or avoids the object. To feel pleasure or pain is to act with the perceptive mean towards what is good or bad as such' (431a8–11). We need to take this together with *AE* B.11, 1143b2–5: roughly, the agent perceives some feature of the situation as salient in perceiving it as inviting some practical response that he imagines with pleasure. This pleasure is associated with the agent's discrimination of some practical option as looking likely to realize some ethical value in the circumstances. It registers at once the focusing of a desire, and the application of a concept. Once there is a question to be asked, 'How am I to achieve such-and-such an end?', deliberation can come into play. As deliberation proceeds, other concepts may fuel further perceptions that reinterpret the situation in the light of other values of the agent's. The intervention of *nous* is not once and for all; it is first in and last (or at least late) out.

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more doubtful (contrast Tuozzo 1991), so long as we allow a role for *background* generalizations (most of which will hold only 'for the most part') that may feed implicitly into *occurrent* intuitions.

[25] If I am right to follow Kenny in supposing a close relation in Aristotle between deliberation and *logismos*, we cannot suppose, *pace* Wiggins and McDowell, that the goal that constitutes the starting point of *logismos* is reached through a looser and less articulable mode of *deliberation*. This might be dismissed as a point of terminology. Yet Wiggins puts to me that more is at stake: may the agent not have *reasons* for selecting one goal rather than another, and is this not subject to rational assessment? Which may suggest that some kind of thinking informs the selection.

I reply as follows. Certainly *nous* is an exercise of intelligence, operating against a background of standing concerns, which identifies in the circumstances a feature that prompts the forming of an end. One may compare perceiving a white object as 'son of Diares', presumably on the *basis* (which is not to say on the *ground*) of some visual resemblance, despite a generational difference, between the man I see and the Diares I remember. Aristotle classifies this as incidental perception (*De An.* 2.6, 418a20–1), and not as inference. It is a contrast that seeing the sun as one foot across may be accompanied by a certainty that things are not so (3.3, 428b2–4, *Insomn.* 2.458b28–9), whereas intuiting one's situation as saliently suggesting a certain goal involves a provisional intention to achieve it if one can. (Hence one may speak here of 'noetic apprehension'.) Yet neither the perception nor the intuition is discursive. Aristotle contrasts *nous* and *logos* (*AE* B.11, 1143a36–b1), and says both of *euboulia* (9, 1142b12) and of *phronēsis* itself (*EE* 8.2, 1247a13–14) that they have a *logos*. That there can be something that counts as *thinking* even without a *logos* is not a thesis that we can ascribe to him.

5. Apprehension, deliberation, judgement

If one rejects as not Aristotelian the extended conception of deliberation proposed by Wiggins and McDowell, does it follow that, as one side of an old debate has it, deliberation is not of ends?[26] It need not follow, and there is evidence that Aristotle did not infer it. Relevant here, but ambiguous, is *AE* B.9. I have already quoted from *AE* B.5 a tight relation between *phronēsis* and deliberation: to be a *phronimos is* to be able to deliberate well (1140a25–6). Consequently, we might take the discussion of 'excellence in deliberation' (*euboulia*) in B.9 to be also a discussion of *phronēsis*. However, the chapter ends with what has usually been understood as a distinction: 'If, then, it is characteristic of *phronimoi* to have deliberated well, excellence in deliberation will be correctness with regard to that which conduces to the end of which *phronēsis* is the true supposition' (1142b31–3).

Some have found an ambiguity of scope: is that of which '*phronēsis* is the true supposition' the end (with a restrictive 'which', and no comma after 'end'—as I have written it), or 'what conduces to the end' (with a descriptive 'which', and a comma after 'end')? However, the former construal must (I believe) be right: otherwise, the end that is being conduced to (*to telos*, 1142b33) remains unsupported in syntax and unspecified in content.

It might be thought to support the other construal that, as I quoted earlier, the *phronimos* deliberates well about 'what sorts of things conduce to the good life in general' (*AE* B.5, 1140a25–8). Yet there the end is the determinable *living well*; here 'the end in the unqualified sense' (*to telos to haplōs*) contrasts with 'a particular end' (*ti telos*, 2.9, 1142b30–1) not as the determinable to the determinate, but as a good specific end to a bad or indifferent one.[27] It might be supposed that the proper specific end of action is identified by *nous*, whereas the proper means to that are identified by *euboulia*, both helping to constitute *phronēsis*.[28] And yet there can be no easy demarcation of roles, given that, in the absence of exceptionless positive generalizations about ends of the kind that Aristotle envisages as starting points (see *NE* 1.3, 1094b14–19),[29] the acceptability of such an end is relative to context; for part of the acceptability of an end in a given context is that the end can be acceptably realized in the context.

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[26] Whence the title of Tuozzo (1991), an essay that is meticulous in its attention to the evidence.

[27] Pakaluk prompted this reading (of which he makes a different use). It is established, I think, by the contrast between good and bad ends at *EE* 2.10, 1227a18–31 (see *NE* 3 4): the end that is naturally 'best without qualification' (*to telos to haplōs ariston*), but may unnaturally be only 'the apparent good' (*to phainomenon agathon*, 1227a21–2), cannot be the determinable living well, and must be one of its determinations.

[28] The best indication (despite some uncertainty in the text) that practical *nous*, in the special sense evident at *AE* B.11, 1143b2–5, falls within *phronēsis* is at *AE* B.8, 1142a25–30.

[29] See more fully Price (2005b: § 3).

Consequently, a decision by *phronēsis* that a certain end is to be pursued cannot be independent of investigation by *euboulia* into ways and means. This is confirmed by the initial hypothesis (which is evidently taken to have been already confirmed, and within the scope of which what follows is asserted), 'It is characteristic of *phronimoi* to have deliberated well' (1142b31–2); for that implies—as has often been overlooked—that it is *deliberation* that grounds the 'true supposition of the end' (b33) that is *phronēsis*. Perhaps we should stress a different contrast (see Greenwood, 1909: 64–7): whereas *phronēsis* is a 'true supposition' (*alēthēs hupolēpsis*, b33; see *AE* B.3, 1139b15–18), deliberation is a seeking (*zētēsis*), and not an asserting (*phasis*, 1142b13–15). Yet how is *phronēsis* to achieve a true judgement of an end through a process of deliberation?[30]

Wiggins already offered a clue (2002b: 232; see 2006: 98, n. 8): 'Someone may think it clear to him in a certain situation what is the relevant concern, and yet find himself discontent with every practical syllogism promoting that concern... He may resile from the concern when he sees what it leads to, or what it costs, and start all over again. It is not necessarily true that he who wills the end must will the means.' Broadie elaborates this as follows (1991: 239):

> The "How?" of this agent's deliberation is not purely causal; it means "What way is there for me to pursue and attain O in this situation so that the pursuit and attainment would be acceptable in terms of all else that matters?" Deciding this question requires him to make comparative evaluations to the effect that O is or is not worthwhile given this amount of trouble, these undesirable consequences etc., as well as to make factual judgments about the causal possibilities.

Deliberation thus involves a sequence of operations: noetic apprehension proposes a provisional end to be achieved in the context; deliberation, aided by further perceptions and appreciations as appropriate, then explores whether it can indeed be acceptably realized in the context; there finally emerges a judgement yielding a choice of doing *this* for the sake of *that*.

Though no such sequence is adequately spelled out at *AE* B.9, 1142b31–3, it makes sense of the passage to suppose one. What other evidence is there in the *Ethics*? Frustratingly close to providing what we want is *NE* 3.3: 'If we come to an impossibility, we give up the search, for example if we need money and this cannot be got; but if a thing appears possible we try to do it' (1112b24–7). More general is a remark that 'we do not choose all the things that we deliberate about' (*EE* 2.10, 1226b18–19); for this leaves open why certain options are explored but not chosen. What we would wish Aristotle to acknowledge explicitly is that an option may turn out to be 'impossible' in context not because it cannot be achieved, but because it cannot be achieved acceptably.

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[30] The question was already posed by *AE* B.5, 1140b11–21. There the *archē*, which is the proper end of action, is the object of a judgement (*hupolēpsis*) by *phronēsis*, which is a state involving a true *logos* (or, in Bywater's text, a true state involving a *logos*) about human goods. This is surely the *logos* that defined the mean for choice at *NE* 2.6, 1106b36–1107a2. And yet we have been told that *of* the end there is neither *sullogismos* nor *logismos* (*EE* 2.11, 1227b24–5). We need to find a manner in which deliberation, which is oriented towards a goal that it cannot originate, nonetheless does not follow it blindly, but tests it.

There is indirect confirmation, however. Take an evidently important passage in *De An.* 3.11: 'Whether one shall do this thing or do that thing it is the work of reasoning to decide. And such reason necessarily implies the power of measurement by a single standard (*anankē heni metrein*). For what one pursues is the greater good. So it is able to make one out of several appearances' (434a7–10). Quite what 'single standard' Aristotle envisages is a matter of conjecture; it doubtless varies between different contexts of choice (so Wiggins, 2002c: 258–9)—though saying that escapes insanity without yet achieving clarity.[31] Such comparative reflection can only be the work of *phronēsis*.[32] If we had a better idea of its content, we would be better placed to identify its structure, and how this fits the close connection between deliberation and syllogism.[33] Yet there is one obvious point to be made: such comparisons can only be made once there is a plurality of options on the table (such as Aristotle's phrase 'several appearances' evidently connotes). And then choice is indeed, as Aristotle takes over from the etymology of *prohairesis*, of *one* thing in preference to *others* (*NE* 3.2, 1112a16–17; *EE* 2.10, 1226b7–8). So we should think not of a determinable 'acting well' that gradually takes on a single form (as McDowell would appear to envisage). Rather, we might have an initial *desideratum*, say ϕ'ing, presumptively desirable and achievable in the circumstances, that may be achievable in different ways, say by ψ'ing or by ξ'ing, which will have to be weighed against each other. Alternatively, in some cases, intuition may suggest to the agent that he ϕ, or alternatively that he χ; it will then be as if he has a disjunctive *desideratum*, which he must narrow down by forming a preference, if only after considering the different ways and means of achieving one or the other.

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[31] *De An.* 3.11 cannot mean that there is a single and measurable value that determines all human choices; yet it can hardly mean, either, that only a single value is operative in any particular situation of choice. Nussbaum (1978: 177) makes a useful connection with *NE* 3.3, 1112b16–17. One way of conceiving the process is as follows. *As I narrow my options*, I may select between them on grounds either of ease, or of rapidity, or of connection with some other goal; *at any one point*, only one metric is in play.

However, a longish discussion within *EE* 7.10 shows that there can be a single measure without a single value. Here Aristotle permits two things different in kind to be related in a proportion: 'One must measure by a single standard (*heni metrēteon*) even there [when comparing benefits within mixed friendships where the benefits differ in kind, e.g. pleasure and utility], but not by a term but by a ratio; we must measure by proportion (*tōi analogon metrēteon*), just as the association of citizens is measured. For how is a cobbler to have dealings with a farmer unless one equates the work of the two by proportion?' (1243b28–32). This shows that the phrase 'measuring by a single standard' need not imply a single value, just so long as the values in question are commensurable. Yet Aristotle starts by observing that 'it is difficult to measure by a single standard things that are not in a single straight line' (b16–17), and does not explicitly take back a remark that 'knowledge and money are not measured by a single standard' (b23). So it may vary between cases whether the values are commensurable or not. (Cobbler and farmer have in common that they are useful.)

[32] Indecisive is *EE* 3.5, 1232a35–7, discussing *megalopsuchia*: 'Every special virtue discriminates the greater and the less correctly, however the *phronimos* and virtue would prescribe.' However, it must be by exercising of *phronēsis* that the virtuous agent makes reflective discriminations.

[33] The practical syllogisms of which Aristotle gives us examples are reasonings to ways or means of achieving some fairly specific end, with a way or means most often being put forward as necessary. Yet there is also a need for comparisons; for there may be alternatives, of which some are better or easier than others (*NE* 3.3, 1112b16–17). Aristotelian deliberation certainly *focuses upon* syllogisms; yet it is unclear how much of it is *exhausted by* syllogisms.

My proposal partly diverges from Broadie, who writes as follows (1991: 246):

> The business of virtue is not just to set up an end and then sit back while intelligence sifts means. But does this not contradict Aristotle's division of the functions, whereby moral virtue makes the end right and intellectual capacities take care of the means? No, unless we make the unnecessary assumption that they do not operate *simultaneously*. According to the present account, the selection or rejection of means at each stage represents both sides of that division, integrating (1) a factual picture (due to intelligence) of a possible course of action M and its conditions and consequences under the envisaged circumstances, with (2) an evaluation (due to moral character) of O as an end worth or not worth pursuing under the conditions and with the results implied by pursuing it through M.

This demarcation is suspiciously reminiscent of a Humean division between matters of fact (and notably of causal relations) that fall to reason, and questions of evaluation that fall to desire. Yet it evidently comes not of a thoughtless adherence to Humean presuppositions, but of a conscious attempt to do justice to our problem sentence: 'Virtue [that is, of character] makes the target correct' (*AE* B.12, 1144a7–8). For this would appear to mean that virtue selects not just whatever target it is sensible for the agent to take as a starting point of his deliberations, but whatever target wise deliberation will confirm as the best goal of action in the context.

And yet the cost seems high. Early in section 1, I cited a general declaration: 'Desire is grounded by opinion, rather than opinion by desire; for thinking is the starting point' (*Meta.* 7, 1072a29–30). This is confirmed in the *Ethics* by such statements as that 'no one wishes what he does not think to be good' (*AE* A.9, 1136b7–8; see *NE* 3.4, 1113a15–16; *EE* 2.7, 1223b32–3).[34] We must make sense of *AE* B.12, 1144a7–8 not in isolation, but as a reminiscence of *EE* 2.11, 1227b22–5: 'Does virtue make the target or the things towards it? We lay down that it makes the target, for the reason that of this there is neither *sullogismos* nor *logismos*.' How is this compatible with a suggestion, however attractive itself, that the eligibility of a target in context is tested by deliberation?[35] The best answer I have treats 'Virtue makes the target right' as an Aristotelian categorical (see Foot, 2001: 29–35), which states a general function that is not invariably fulfilled. Recall that the selection of a provisional goal by *nous*-cum-virtue was never a leap in the dark, but an exercise in what Wiggins has called 'situational appreciation' (2002b: 237). Hence cases where an initial goal, though wisely selected, has ultimately to be discarded or amended must be the exception. In most cases, the right goal is identical to the *initial* goal. Yet this must be adopted with a reservation, that is, subject to confirmation by reflection upon how it can be realized in context. In cases where the agent has to think again, the right goal is the *emergent* goal. This is owed both to the decency of the initial goal, and to inference (*sullogismos* and *logismos*) that did not precede that but follows exploratively upon it, and to any further operations of *nous* that are prompted by the situation. Thus the agent first perceives his situation as provisionally prompting a certain goal; reflection upon how to achieve that goal in that situation needs to be open to new perceptions of the situation as inviting a different, or more complex, goal. It is true that this requires an intelligent flexibility in the agent's motivational orientation: having realized that a different or modified goal is appropriate, his thinking and acting become oriented towards *that*. Thus in most cases, the target is selected by virtue, though confirmed by reason; in other cases, it is prompted by rational reflection and further perception, though it then also needs to be *adopted as a target* by desire.[36]

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[34] And what of *De An.* 3.11, 434a5–10 (which Broadie does not mention)? Certainly I may find myself desiring one thing more than another in a way that is not brute but displays discrimination. But can it really be an exercise of excellence of character, and not of *phronēsis*, consciously to *weigh things up*?

6. By way of conclusion

My own position remains predominantly, and indebtedly, Broadie's.[37] How greatly does this put me at odds with McDowell (from whom I have also learnt much)? Not, I wish to propose in conclusion, as much as it might appear. For Broadie and McDowell are largely, I believe, at cross purposes.

Broadie is much concerned with deliberation *as a process*. Thus she writes (1991: 227), 'Real life deliberation consists in focusing on some initially salient consideration, as that my situation is S or that O is desirable, and then finding relevant considerations which, together with the first, point to an action within my power that would convert S into a situation from which I achieve O.' It is this interest in plausible sequence that leads her to introduce wider considerations later (1991: 234–5):

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[35] I have already noted that, whether or not we actually supply <*orthon*> after *hē aretē poiei ton skopon* in 1227b23, the preceding lines make it clear that Aristotle has in mind the *correct* selection of a target (see n. 12 above).

[36] I take these essential interconnections between the operations of *phronēsis*, and those of dispositions of desire that have been schooled into virtue, to lie behind Aristotle's observation that *phronēsis*, not being a thing one could forget, cannot simply be a state with a *logos* (*AE* B.5, 1140b28–30). It may be because of these interconnections that *phronēsis* is 'the strongest state' (C.2, 1146a5).

[37] I take her 1991: ch. 4 to be by far the best discussion we have of *phronēsis* in Aristotle. It owes its length, which may be found deterrent, to a constant felicity of observation and restatement.

> [Is] what the deliberating agent really aims at . . . some harmonious combination of desiderata, or of those compossible under the circumstances? Yes, if by 'what he aims at' we mean the totality of what he takes steps to promote or secure in an entire course of deliberation and consequent action; but No, if the phrase means the objective from which deliberation starts and concerning which the deliberator asks 'How am I to achieve it?' The fact is that we do not begin with all (or even all relevant) dispositional desires activated. Some are in abeyance until we consider ways of satisfying one of them and then notice how these might affect lateral concerns. Thus the initial narrow objective has the special status of being the only end that colours deliberation all the way through from the beginning.

She then wonders whether, 'from an analytical point of view', it might not be arbitrary to attach so much significance to the initial target of thought and desire. Her response is this (1991: 235): 'What impresses Aristotle, I suppose, is not the chronological difference between first and subsequent occurrent desires influencing deliberation, but the difference between occurrents which do and which do not owe something to the work of *intelligence*.' By 'intelligence' here she means the 'intelligent scanning for means'. It is not that initial desires are instinctive, and later desires discriminating; *both* (as I have emphasized) rest upon the play of concepts within evaluative perception. Yet some are prompted by the exercise of intelligence within deliberation, whereas others precede deliberation. If the concept of deliberation matters, so should this distinction.

Broadie recognizes that, whereas Aristotle is most interested in deliberation 'as an activity of character and intelligence', *we* may be most interested in—because anxious about—'the grounding and justification of deliberated choice' (1991: 235). For the purposes of marking a contrast, it would be better to speak here not of 'deliberated', but of 'rational', choice. What is crucial, we are likely to think, is not whether an agent *actually* deliberates before acting, and (if so) *in what order* he deliberates, but whether he is *able* to justify his choice if asked for his reasons. It is true that Broadie supposes, like McDowell, that Aristotle does not require that rational choices be actually preceded by deliberation. But I propose that we set this aside, tempting though it is, as fitting neither her interpretation, nor the evidence.[38] Whereas McDowell reads Aristotle's account as centrally aimed at 'the reconstruction of reasons for action not necessarily thought out in advance' (1998c: 66n22), Broadie takes Aristotle to be centrally concerned to analyse deliberation as a plausible sequence of mental acts. It is *this*, and not the most perspicuous structure of reasons for action, that she takes him to be attempting to represent.

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[38] Compare here Broadie and Rowe (2002: 44–5), and McDowell (1995: 215n 14; 1996: 25–6; 1998a: 50–73 ['Virtue and Reason']), who cite *NE* 3.8, 1117a17–22. Aristotle's insistence that choice is preceded by deliberation is recurrent (for references, see n. 6 above) and should, I think, be respected even if it is regretted. Regret may be reduced somewhat by extending a concession that an obvious second premise (e.g. 'I am a man') may well remain implicit (*De Motu* 7, 701a25–8). Very likely Aristotle could be pressed into allowing a wider scope for the telescoping of syllogisms within conscious reflection. Which might bring him within reach of a proposal in Taylor (2006: 189): 'As a result of his or her correct training, the courageous

Consequently, it is unsurprising if McDowell proposes a different structure. He distinguishes 'core explanations' of actions and 'their supplementations' (1998c: 69). A core explanation need do no more than 'mesh' an observed feature of a situation with a standing concern: for example, 'awareness that a friend is in trouble and open to being comforted' can explain one's finding time for him, given a concern for his welfare (67). Yet, for all its amiability, the action might still be acratic or impulsive; to ground a *choice* (in Aristotle's restricted sense), one needs a supplementation which explains 'why it was this concern rather than any other that was drawn into operation' (68), so 'enabling us to share, or at least comprehend, the agent's perception of saliences' (69). The upshot is a two-stage account (ibid.):

> With the core explanations and their supplementations, I have in effect been treating the complete explanations as coming in two stages. It is at the first stage—hitherto the supplementation—that knowledge of how to live interacts with particular knowledge: knowledge, namely, of all the particular facts capable of engaging with concerns whose fulfilment would, on occasion, be virtuous. This interaction yields, in a way that is essentially dependent on appreciation of the particular case, a view of the situation with one such fact, as it were, in the foreground. Seen as salient, that fact serves, at the second stage, as minor premise in a core explanation.

In effect, the 'core explanation' spells out the *content* of the choice (which, as *EE* 2.11, 1227b37 states, is *of* one thing *for the sake of* another). The 'supplementation' explains how that was the content of a *choice*, emerging not just out

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agent has internalized a pattern of response to situations of danger which enables him or her to respond correctly immediately, without having to stop to think. But that is not to say that the action is done without thought. Rather, we can say that all the crucial thinking has been done in advance, leaving only a gap for the recognition of the situation as calling for this response or that; once that gap is filled by perception, action follows immediately.' As is evident in a passage that Taylor cites (*NE* 2.9, 1109b22–3), this perception must be in a maximal sense *perceptive* if the agent is not to 'stumble badly because of lack of sight' (*AE* B.13, 1144b11–12).

We should also remember that Aristotle's conception of choice is restricted. Choice is of one thing both *in preference to* others (*NE* 3.2, 1112a16–17; *EE* 2.10, 1226b7–8), and *for the sake of* something (*EE* 2.11, 1227b37). Hence many actions that we count as intentional will not count for Aristotle as chosen. However, Aristotle also presumes more generally that action, human or animal, comes of a mechanism whereby *occurrent* desire, as 'a form of motion' (*kinēsis tis*), causes motion (*De An.* 3.10, 433b17–18). Less abstractly, 'The animal moves and progresses in virtue of desire or choice, when some alternation has taken place in accordance with perception or *phantasia*' (*De Motu* 6, 701a4–6). This 'automatic-machine aspect of the practical syllogism' (as Anscombe calls it, 1981a: 74) appears to require occurrent mental causes of action. This will apply whether we have a full case of occurrent deliberation leading into choice, or a simpler case where the perception of something as pleasant suffices to activate appetite (*AE* C.6, 1149a35–b1)—or a Taylor case where 'thinking has been done in advance'.

of attraction towards an end, but out of a judicious responsiveness to all the losses and gains that are presently under the agent's control.

However, one must note that these 'stages' are logical, not temporal. As a *rational reconstruction*, the account says nothing about any *temporal sequence* of reflections. Even so, its identification of the supplementation of the core explanation as spelling out 'the first stage' of deliberation is doubtfully felicitous. It would be better to conceive of it as *enveloping* the core *logismos*, and coming into play whenever a possible means to a provisional end may connect, negatively or positively, with other ends.[39] When Broadie places this within a temporal sequence, she is spelling it out in terms of an intelligible narrative—though one that she agrees with McDowell in viewing as often only 'as if' (see McDowell, 1998c: 66n22). So far there need be no substantive disagreement between them.

Where they explicitly diverge from each other is in respect of the comparative evaluations that are spelled out within McDowell's 'supplementation': Broadie ascribes these to *ethical virtue*, McDowell to *deliberation*. However, McDowell himself warns us against ascribing very much significance to Aristotle's division between ethical and intellectual virtues, concluding that 'we need not take the intellectual desiderative aspects of excellence of character, in the strict sense, to be even notionally separable components of a composite state' (1996: 27–8).[40] Neither can be denying the role that Aristotle ascribes to *nous* (notably at *AE* B.11, 1143a35–b5), which I have interpreted as yielding intuitions about a situation that are fuelled by the agent's perceptions, and infused by his standing concerns. The substantive question is how best to shed further light upon this.

Broadie addresses the purposes of McDowell's supplementation by requiring that practical thinking whose purpose is not just acting but acting well be 'open to any sort of humanly relevant consideration' (Broadie and Rowe 2002: 359).

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[39] Here both Woods and Broadie are illuminating, to, I think, equivalent effect. Woods writes (1986: 163), 'If I am in a position of needing to raise money for a certain purpose, the question can arise whether this or that way of doing so is acceptable, on grounds, say, of justice. But so long as the ways of doing so are seen simply as falling under some relatively indeterminate description (e.g. "borrowing money") there may be no determinate answer to the question whether acting in a way that satisfies this general specification would involve injustice.' Broadie observes (1991: 247), 'As long as we need to ask how some means might be realised, we have not yet taken account of all the conditions and consequences attending possible means to the means. Thus the situation in which O would be pursued is still deliberatively indeterminate, and the judgment that O is worthwhile in the terms dictated by the circumstances remains provisional... The agent's view of the fact is sufficiently determinate (and the rational choice is made) as soon as he perceives a means immediately within his power and at the same time knows that how precisely he handles it is of no negative evaluative significance.'

[40] Aristotle mentions as a possibility (but sets aside as immaterial 'for our present purpose') that the rational and non-rational aspects of the human soul are not two separate 'parts', but rather inseparable as 'convex and concave in the circumference of a circle' (*NE* 1.13, 1102a28–32; see *EE* 2.1, 1219b32–4). This may perfectly suit the intimate relation between a choice to ϕ, and a judgement that ϕ'ing is the thing to do; for these differ in their logical grammar but always accompany each other (*NE* 3.2, 1112a3–5).

Simple inferences to necessary or sufficient means to restricted ends may be complicated, if not blocked, by the intrusion of further considerations. This plainly gives explanation more work: it must make clear *why* an agent, on some occasion, privileges one intelligible end over another. In McDowell's example, it may or may not be the mark of a wise agent to give up his evening to his friend rather than to occupy it otherwise. And then, McDowell thinks, we need to find room for an answer of the following form (1996: 25): 'Because a correct conception of doing well, as brought to bear on this situation, dictates acting with a view to such-and-such an end.' Without appeal to such a conception, he supposes, there can be no understanding 'of how these pursuings of narrower ends hang together' (ibid.).

Now Broadie is fully aware that there is more to be said: '"For the sake of happiness"... expresses... the agent's awareness of each of his actual and possible projects as unfolding within his own life, hence as having to be mutually adjusted, where possible, so that the achievement of any one of these goods would not render itself harmful or futile: for instance by destroying his chances for a greater good, or by undermining conditions for enjoying or using the first' (1991: 47). Abstractly, there is a single ultimate end: 'If we examined the life of the sort of person whom Aristotle deems happy, we should say that although for him different targets loom at different times, each presenting itself as his current goal, what he really cares about more and more constantly than he does about any of these is conducting himself well' (48). Concretely, if the agent possesses that virtue of character that is a condition of choosing well, there must be a pattern that underlies his manifold choices, and makes his life of a piece. It is not that, in the last analysis, *the one thing* he cares about is some end either abstract or for ever elusive and ineffable, but that his deliberations give weight, in ways that vary as much as (though no more than) the situations that he faces, to *all the things* he cares about. A complete explanation of any particular choice would reveal enough of the agent's life to show how *that* choice is at home within *that* life.

Broadie surely earns the right to say that a correct choice evidences what McDowell calls 'a correct conception of doing well' (1996: 25). What more does McDowell want? He envisages a conception that is 'only implicit in the mind of the deliberator' (1996: 24); so when he speaks of the conception as being 'brought to bear on this situation' (25), he cannot mean that it is consciously applied. Moreover, he writes, 'Grasp of the universal that forms the content of a correct conception of doing well need not be isolable, *even in principle*, as a component in the propensity to put that end into practice in specific situations' (24, my italics). Anyone who has learnt from Wittgenstein may concede that 'we can still conceive exercises of the propensity as applications of a universal' (ibid.); less clear to me is what scope this leaves for '*deliberation* with a view to doing well' (ibid., my italics). One may count as applying a universal concept to a particular even if one can only identify the universal by reference to the particulars to which one applies it. This even leaves room for reflection of a kind: one may decide how to apply the universal in one case by considering how it applies in other cases. However, this cannot always be necessary (or we could never get going).[41] What we can say—and Broadie can agree—more generally is that for an agent to apply a consistent conception of *eudaimonia* is for there to be, non-coincidentally of course, a consistent pattern in his intuitive and reflective responses, from one situation within his life to another, to the opportunities and constraints that confront him. Wondering, for example, in a situation which permits me either to ϕ or to χ, which would best serve my *eudaimonia* amounts to comparing the pros and cons of ϕ'ing with those of χ'ing in a manner that is open to whatever considerations, relevant in the context, really matter to me as the person that I am, with the character that I have. It is to attempt to make a choice that I can stand by and live with (see *NE* 9.4, 1166a27–9).

In conclusion, let me sum up what I have been proposing. A mature agent brings to a situation a pattern of habituated responses, affective and cognitive, that constitute his character. They shed a distinctive light upon the situation that makes salient for him features that invite the pursuit of some fairly specific end. He now deliberates about whether and how to achieve this end, in this situation, in a way that does justice to his other ends and concerns. The kernel of his deliberation can be set out in a piece of reasoning from an end (such as retaining his health) to a way or means (such as taking a walk), which prefigures the purposeful action that may ensue (such as taking a walk in order to retain one's health). Calculating means to an end can be idle rather than practical (as it is when Aristotle offers simplified examples). It becomes practical when it is pursued *for the sake of* an end, and so can serve intelligibly to yield a choice out of a wish. And it becomes an exercise of *phronēsis* when the agent is open to reflection about how and whether he can achieve his provisional end acceptably, that is, in a way that constitutes *acting well*.

So much is surely familiar to us from our own experience: at least broadly, Aristotle is being faithful to that. Yet much else certainly needs clarifying. It should be plain that we have here no Gordian knot to be cut with a single blow, even by an Alexander. How character and intelligence are blended in successful practical thinking invites careful and cautious analysis. No magic is worked by any quick definitions or demarcations. What we need to bring to our task, as we try to make discursive sense of our partly articulate practice, is not a spirit of partisanship, but patience, humility, and trust.

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[41] Recall that Aristotle speaks here of *nous*, which he opposes to *logos* (*AE* B.11, 1143a35–b5), and not of *euboulia*, which involves a *logos* (9, 1142b12).

7

Deliberation and Choice in Aristotle

Heda Segvic

> There was no obvious questioning, nor figurings, nor diagrams. There was, apparently, no considered loopholes. It appeared that the swift wings of their desires would have shattered against the iron gates of the impossible (Crane 1967: 222–3).

1. What is deliberation?

Our understanding of what deliberation (*bouleusis*) is for Aristotle should start from his remarks about *euboulia,* the virtue of deliberating well. For that is deliberation at its best.

At *NE* 6.7, 1141b12–14 he characterizes the unconditionally good deliberator, *ho haplōs euboulos,* as 'the person who is capable of aiming *(stochastikos)* in accordance with calculation *(kata ton logismon)* at what is the best for a human being of things pursued in action'.[1] This characterization very nearly sums up Aristotle's understanding of practical wisdom, *phronēsis,* the overarching virtue of practical intellect. He makes the point himself, by way of preface to the characterization of the good deliberator just quoted. He says: 'we say that deliberating well *(to eu bouleuesthai)* is above all the *ergon* of the practically wise person' (1141b9–10). An account of some things is to be sought in the work they do. Aristotle uses the term *ergon* to capture the kind of activity that defines a thing of this sort. (Thus he attempts to specify what makes human beings the beings they are in his *ergon* argument at *NE* 1.7.) The *ergon* of a thing is best characterized as what the thing does that makes it what it is. Accordingly, to specify the practically wise person's *ergon* is to spell out precisely what makes him practically wise. To say that deliberating well is above all the *ergon* of the practically wise person is to say that what makes a person practically wise is, beyond all else, the person's *euboulia,* deliberative excellence.

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[1] *Logismos,* calculation, as Aristotle uses it here, looks to be a near synonym for *bouleusis,* deliberation. See *NE* 6.1, 1139a12–13: 'Deliberation (*to bouleuesthai*) and calculation (*logizesthai*) are the same.'

That deliberative excellence is a defining feature of practical wisdom is a point Aristotle makes more than once. At *NE* 6.5, 1140a25–8, he notes: 'It is thought to be a mark of a person of practical wisdom to be able to deliberate well about what is good and expedient for himself, not in some particular respect, for example, about what sorts of thing conduce to health or to strength, but about what sorts of thing conduce to the good life in general.' And a little bit further on, at 1140a30–1: 'It follows that in general the person who is good at deliberating *(ho bouleutikos)* is practically wise.'[2]

A virtue for Aristotle is always something *idion,* specific or proper to the activity of which it is a virtue. *Euboulia* is what makes one good at deliberation—it is that activity's 'proper' virtue. If *bouleusis,* deliberation, were thought of as a process of reasoning in the narrow sense—going through the steps of an argument, whether deductive or inductive, or working out by which means to attain a goal—then *euboulia,* as its proper virtue, could not consist in aiming at the right goal, or a tendency to aim at the right goal,[3] in accordance with reasoning or calculation. Rather, it would consist in being good at reasoning or calculating in a narrower sense. A good deliberator would be someone who produces good inferences, which can serve him well in the pursuit of whatever goal he has.

The characterization of the good deliberator given at *NE* 6.7 is reinforced by the account of deliberative excellence at *NE* 6.9, the chapter that specifically deals with this virtue. At 6.9, 1142b21–2 *euboulia* is described, and in fact defined, as correctness of deliberation *(boulē)* which achieves a good *(hē agathou teuktikē),* or which tends to achieve a good ('tending to achieve' is a possible, and, I think, the intended meaning of *teuktikē*). A reliable tendency to achieve the end requires aiming in the right direction, and more. One's conception of the end has to be correct, and the steps one takes in an attempt to attain the end must be the right steps. The characterization of *euboulia* in terms of a tendency to achieve the end is therefore more demanding than the characterization given at 1141b12–14, where this virtue is taken to be responsible only for the correct aiming.

Given the account of deliberative excellence in *NE* 6.9, it is not surprising that this excellence is regarded as a definitive mark of practical wisdom. Someone whose use of his reason reliably enables him to aim at, and attain, the best life for a human being is someone who uses his reason as well as reason can be used for practical purposes. The two characterizations together make it clear that correctness of deliberation demands directedness at the right goal, not just formally correct reasoning in pursuit of an independently given goal.[4]

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[2] See also 6.9, 1142b31–2: 'since, then, deliberating well is a mark of people of practical wisdom [...]'.

[3] *Stochastikos* can have either meaning.

The characterization of *euboulia* as a tendency to achieve the right goal appears in the context of a very careful examination of what sort of correctness is involved in deliberative excellence (1142b8ff.). A good deliberator could not be someone who tends to achieve the goal if he were not good at reasoning, especially of the means–end sort. At 1142b22–6 Aristotle mentions the need to reach the right goal through a correct inference, noting that reaching the right end through a wrong inference *(pseudē syllogismō(i))* is 'not yet' *euboulia*. The remark shows that Aristotle, even as he makes the point that producing correct inferences is necessary for deliberative excellence, is not tempted to identify this virtue with an inferential skill.

The good deliberator, as someone who aims at, and tends to attain, the right goal by making correct choices, is someone who is good at effectively directing his desiring, and more specifically his aiming in action, toward goals that he chooses as ways of living a good life. What he is good at—deliberation—is not simply reasoning in the service of a practical goal, but an effective determination of desire toward the right goal by means of reasoning.

A puzzle concerning the relationship between deliberation and virtue of character points toward the same understanding of deliberation. The puzzle is the following. All virtuous actions are in Aristotle's view chosen, and therefore result from deliberation. (He defines choice as what is determined by deliberation at *NE* 3.2, 1112a15.) Yet if by 'deliberation' we understand a process of explicit reasoning or calculation, of the means–end or some other sort, it is simply not reasonable to claim that all virtuous actions are done after deliberation. This is so even if we allow for the possibility that the relevant piece of reasoning was carried out quite some time before the action.[5] Many virtuous actions are not deliberated in the usual sense of this word. Courageous actions come to mind, but virtue more generally seems not to require, or sometimes even permit, calculation. Aristotle would have recognized this more than anyone else. His insistence that we become, say, just by doing just actions indicates that it is not an excogitated action that counts as virtuous, but one that stems from one's properly formed emotional and desiderative propensities. In some cases immediacy of response may be a distinguishing mark of a courageous, or otherwise virtuous, person. To assume in such cases that deliberation must have been carried through some time before the action seems like an attempt to save Aristotle's view that virtuous actions are chosen at any cost.

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[4] A widely used translation of the *Nicomachean Ethics* renders the first two passages quoted above on deliberative excellence in a way that entirely obscures the point I have been attempting to bring out. Irwin (1985a) at 1141b9–10 reads: 'deliberating well is the function of the intelligent [i.e. practically wise] person more than anyone else'. However, *malista*, 'above all,' undoubtedly modifies *ergon*, 'the function'. The meaning is that deliberating well characterizes the practically wise person more than anything else does (characterize him). It would be extremely awkward for Aristotle to point out that deliberating well is a function of the practically wise person *more than of anyone else*. ('Anyone else' is not in the Greek; it is added by Irwin.) The practically wise person is an embodiment of the ideal practical use of reason, so it goes without saying that he is a better deliberator than anyone else. What does not go without saying is that excellence in deliberation is more than anything else a definitive mark of a practically wise person, namely, that it defines the excellent use of practical reason which makes for practical wisdom. As I already pointed out, this reading is supported elsewhere, for instance, by 1140a25–8. The characterization of the unconditional *euboulos* at 1141b12–14 reads in Irwin's rendition as follows: 'the unconditionally good deliberator is the one whose aim expresses rational calculation in pursuit of the best good for a human being that is achievable in action'. The central claim that the good deliberator is *ho stochastikos*—the one who is *capable of aiming*, or the one who *aims* at the best goal for human beings—has been lost here. Irwin's translation steers us toward the view that the excellent use of reason consists in calculation. This fits Irwin's rather narrow understanding of deliberation in Aristotle (see Irwin 1988 and 1989). Both translations, however, are far from the Greek. (The translation of 1141b12–14 is otherwise not felicitous: it is not a prerogative of a good deliberator that his aim expresses rational calculation in pursuit of *eudaimonia*. The bad deliberator's aim might be expressive of his (bad) rational calculation in pursuit of *eudaimonia* just as well.)

The view that virtuous actions involve choice, and therefore deliberation, is not detachable from Aristotle's understanding of virtue. He builds it into the definition of virtue. On one reading, the famous definition of virtue of character at *NE* 2.6, 1106b36–1107a2 states: 'Virtue, then, is a state having to do with choice *(hexis prohairetikē)*, lying in the mean which is relative to us and which is determined by reason, such reason by which the practically wise person would determine it.'[6] This definition has been variously interpreted. The precise sense in which the ethical *hexis* is related to choice has been a matter of debate. Virtue could be a state concerned with choice, a state which chooses, a state formed as a result of choice, and so on. Virtue of character is in fact connected with choice in more than one way, and the difficulty lies in determining which connection Aristotle has in mind when he defines virtue of character. It seems most likely that virtue is defined as a prohairetic state in the sense that it is a disposition to make correct choices. These choices are determined by reason, and the determination is of the sort the person of practical wisdom would make.

The practically wise person, defined as he is above all by his deliberative use of reason, figures in the very definition of virtue of character.[7] The reason for this is that ethical virtues—courage, moderation, or gentleness, for instance—are all without exception deliberative virtues. Each involves a capacity to use reason to reach the right choice in a certain well-defined range of circumstances—too well defined, perhaps, for Aristotle seems anxious to combat the Socratic tendency to construe particular virtues in the broadest terms possible. Socrates wanted each virtue to expand to fill the whole field of virtuous action, since he was convinced that there only was one thing properly called virtue.[8] For Aristotle, the well-delimited circumstances pertaining to each particular virtue naturally provoke a definite range of desiderative or emotional responses: fear, appetitive desire, or anger, in the case of the three virtues mentioned. An agent's response to such specific circumstances is virtuous only if the resultant action is motivated by desires and passions that are not only moderate, but whose moderateness has been shaped by their reasoned outlook on life. The training of emotions that qualifies one as a brave, temperate, or gentle person essentially involves a training of the intellect. The standard of what counts as moderate is set by reason. Aristotle was therefore firmly convinced that all ethical virtue involves rational judgement. Virtue of character not only requires, but, being a disposition to choose correctly, directly embodies the excellence in deliberation that is the defining characteristic of the practically wise person.

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[5] As Cooper (1975: 7–8) has plausibly argued.

[6] Reading Bywater's text: ὡρισμένῃ λόγῳ καὶ ᾧ ἂν ὁ φρόνιμος ὁρίσειεν at 1107a1–2. ᾧ is Aspasius' reading; the manuscripts have ὡς.

[7] Some of Aristotle's thinking behind the view that the practically wise person is the standard of correctness of ethical judgement is discussed in section 5 below.

The admitted difficulties, however, in reconciling Aristotle's view that all virtuous action is chosen, and therefore deliberated, with the fact that many virtuous actions are not excogitated have prompted the suggestion that deliberation in some cases be regarded hypothetically—not as an actual process of arriving at a choice, but rather as a theoretical device deployed for the purpose of explaining or justifying actions. Even when a moral choice has not been reached by explicit calculation—as so often seems to happen—we can, it is suggested, *regard* it as deliberated, since the person's reasons for acting, will, when produced, constitute a deliberative argument in favour of the choice made. Deliberation could be said to lie behind every virtuous action in a hypothetical guise. If the agent acted on *reasons*, it is *as if* he had deliberated in accordance with a practical argument that spells out those reasons (Cooper 1975: 9–10).

As a view about application of practical arguments to actions, the hypothetical approach is a highly reasonable one. Yet it cannot be the correct view of Aristotelian deliberation. The remarks that follow are meant to show that we need to draw a clear line between practical arguments and deliberation.

Actions resulting from deliberation are not the only ones that can be represented by practical arguments. A person motivated by a non-rational desire, either appetitive or spirited,[9] acts for reasons. These reasons can be set out in a form of a practical argument. Aristotle does so himself. In his account of weakness of will in *NE* 7.3, he mentions two practical arguments, which result in a weak-willed action of eating something sweet. The premises of one of these arguments are: 'Everything sweet is pleasant' and 'This is sweet' (1147a32–3). The other argument's universal premise, which goes unheeded, 'forbids tasting'

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[8] See Plato's *Laches* and *Protagoras* for a Socratic analysis of courage, and *Charmides* for an analysis of moderation, and the *Protagoras* for the view that virtue is one and indivisible.

[9] Appetite (*epithumia*) and spirit (*thumos*) are for Aristotle two types of non-rational desire. In recognizing these desires, he follows Plato, and especially the *Republic*.

(1147a32). Aristotle does not want us to imagine that the weak-willed agent is assailed by the thought expressed in his conveniently provided universal premise, 'Everything sweet is pleasant'. The akratic need not have reasoned from this thought, combining it with the observation that the piece of cake in front of him is sweet to reach the conclusion that this piece of cake is pleasant, and should therefore be tasted (see the other helpfully provided premise 'Everything sweet should be tasted', at 1147a29). The premises 'Everything sweet is pleasant' and 'This is sweet' (as well as 'Everything sweet should be tasted') are simply a way of expressing in words the standpoint of the appetitive desire that here motivates the weak-willed action. The awkwardness of the verbal expression of the appetitive impulse comes as no surprise.

Since on Aristotle's view a non-rational desire carries with it an appearance of goodness—namely, a valuation of the object of desire as good—the premise of a practical argument representing the desired object as good (or more specifically, pleasant, in the case of an appetitive desire) can be used with full propriety to represent the non-rational desiderative motivation that prompted the action. Nonetheless, the akratic actions so represented by practical arguments typically do not stem from deliberation. Even someone who did not make the assumption that desire involves valuation could quite legitimately use practical arguments to represent in quasi-deliberative form the agent's reasons for action.

If one therefore permits deliberation in a hypothetical guise in order to secure the link Aristotle envisages between deliberation and virtue, one will have permitted too much. Weak-willed actions, which stem from a breakdown of practical rationality, will count as deliberated. The point of linking virtue with deliberation and choice will have been lost.

A practical argument is a theoretical device for explaining or justifying actions; deliberation is not. Aristotle defines deliberation as a *zētēsis*, a search or an enquiry (with considerable insistence: *NE* 6.9, 1142a31–2, a34, b2, b14, b15), or a *skepsis*,[10] an investigation, of some sort, which, when successfully completed, results in a choice *(prohairesis)*. He takes this characterization of deliberation seriously. The difficult task of course (valiantly tackled in 6.9) is to explain what kind of search or enquiry deliberation is. But whatever kind of enquiry or search it should turn out to be, it is an actual process of arriving at a choice.[11] It is, moreover, part of Aristotle's account of choice that it is a desire of some sort which is causally explained by deliberation.[12] This could not be so if deliberation were not something actual—an actual process, or activity, of some sort. Deliberation must therefore be understood straightforwardly as the process of arriving at a choice, and not be regarded in a hypothetical guise.

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[10] *Skepsis*, which means primarily looking into some matter, is used in this context especially in the *Eudemian Ethics*. For *skepsis*, see *EE* 2.10, 1226b8, 1227a12. For the relevant usages of the related verb *skopein*, see *EE* 2.10, 1226b1 and 2.11, 1227b26; also *NE* 3.3, 1112b16.

[11] Cooper is well aware that deliberation is described by Aristotle as an actual process of arriving at a choice, and he often treats it as such. In taking it sometimes as a hypothetical device, he offers a reasonable solution to the conflict created by Aristotle's insistence that virtuous action is chosen and his considered views about virtuous action as not requiring explicit calculation. However, deliberation is never regarded by Aristotle hypothetically. Whereas Cooper's solution works for practical arguments, it does not help us to understand *bouleusis*.

In the light of this, we must distinguish between practical arguments and deliberation. When an action is deliberated, and a practical argument is used to explain it, the two will of course be closely linked. The premises of the argument should in some form capture the content of the reasoning, whether implicit or explicit, that motivates the agent to act as he does. This should be so at any rate if the practical argument is accurately to reflect the considerations that move the agent to act as he does. However, practical arguments extend further than deliberation and choice. Actions that are not chosen—in the sense of stemming from *prohairesis*—are no less susceptible than chosen actions to representation by a practical argument.

Scholarly discussion about practical reason in Aristotle was for a long time focused on the so-called 'practical syllogism.' Even a cursory reading of Aristotle's ethical treatises, however, strongly indicates that his discussion of practical reason centres on deliberation rather than practical argument.[13] The expression 'practical syllogisms' occurs at most once. As used by Aristotle, the term *syllogismos* does not refer to a syllogism, but more broadly to a deductive inference. In the practical context, *syllogismos* may well be used in a non-technical sense, as a counterpart to the verb *syllogizesthai*, which can refer broadly to putting things together, or reaching a conclusion, by means of reason, but not necessarily by deductive inference. Moreover, in the passage that allegedly uses the term 'practical syllogisms', the words corresponding to 'practical' probably do not modify the term translated as 'syllogisms'.

The sentence reads: *hoi gar syllogismoi tōn praktōn archēn echontes eisin,* [*epeidē toionde to telos kai to ariston, hotidēpote on—estō gar logou charin to tychon*], *NE* 6.12, 1144a31–3. On one reading *tōn praktōn* goes with *oi syllogismoi*: 'For the inferences which deal with acts to be done are things which involve a starting point [viz. 'since the end, i.e. what is best, is of such and such a nature,' whatever it may be—let it for the sake of the argument be what we please]' (in Ross's translation, substituting 'inferences' for 'syllogisms'). On an alternative, and far more plausible reading, *tōn praktōn* goes with *archēn:* 'For the inferences which contain the starting point of things done in action run as follows: ['since the end, i.e. what is best, is of such and such a nature,' etc.].' That *ta prakta,* things done in action, have a starting point, *archē,* which is the goal of action, is something Aristotle points out repeatedly. The phrase itself, *archē tōn praktōn,* is an established part of his ethical discourse. See, for instance, his explanation at

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[12] See *EE* 2.10, 1226b19–20, and the discussion of choice in section 4 below.

[13] The centrality of deliberation in Aristotle's ethics has been fully recognized by Wiggins (1975–6: 29–51; 1978–9).

NE 6.5, 1140b16–17: *hai men gar archai tōn praktōn to hou heneka ta prakta*, 'the starting points of things done in action are that for the sake of which things are done in action.' By contrast, *tōn praktōn* as modifying *syllogismoi* is odd and unprecedented. Moreover, what in this case remains of the clause, *archēn echontes eisin*, is syntactically extremely awkward.[14] The alternative reading is much to be preferred.

Aristotle's interpreters have tried to impose a common form on the notoriously varied kinds of argument-type structures he supplies when describing actions. However, even if there is something he would call a 'practical syllogism', there is reason to doubt that it would be an argument of a special sort, governed by distinctive rules of inference in the way deductive arguments are governed by the rules of deductive inference. Some of the arguments Aristotle produces are deductive in nature, others not; some are not even valid. It would be misguided to expect every argument he uses for illustrative purposes to exhibit a single canonical form.

This does not mean that practical arguments are not important theoretical tools. When our concern is to explain or justify an action, as it often might be, it is well worth our while to try to cast the considerations that motivated the agent in a rationally assessable form. Since the activity of figuring out what to do sometimes does take the form of explicit calculation, a practical argument will not explain the action in an adequate way unless it captures the central elements of the reasoning that led the agent to his action. Some approximation to the agent's reasoning must therefore be sought if the explanation is to be a good one. Yet most explanations do their job quite well without being true to life in capturing the deliberative process. Moreover, a single action, even one that is motivationally not especially complex, can be adequately represented by *ex post facto* arguments of different logical forms.

Explicit calculation is only the limiting instance of a range of shapes that the process of figuring out what to do might take. But Aristotle's determination to regard all virtuous action as deliberated is not sheer obstinacy. It is an expression of his considered view of the extent to which reason is engaged in moral action. It is also based on a recognition of what the process of arriving at a choice—which it is natural to call 'deliberation'—is actually like. There is no reason to expect the process of arriving at a choice to much resemble going through steps of a rational argument, even if the considerations that guided the agent can *ex post facto* be captured in the form of an argument. The deliberative process is not necessarily explicitly calculative; where it does involve explicit calculation, this hardly resembles going through steps of 'practical arguments' as they occur in philosophy textbooks.

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[14] Stewart (1892) who wonders if ἔχοντές εἰσιν is sound, proposes that it be taken as equivalent to ἔχουσιν.

Aristotle's construal of deliberation, allowing as it does ways of arriving at a choice that are not marked by explicit reasoning, is broader than what is termed 'deliberation' in English, and probably similarly broader than *bouleusis* in its ordinary uses. Yet it is a natural enough extension of the term. Aristotle may sometimes have spoken of 'deliberation' in a way that comes closer to the narrow, more calculative, construal. He helps himself to a more conversational usage, for instance, when he distinguishes between two types of *akrasia*, impetuosity *(propeteia)* and weakness *(astheneia)*. The weak person, Aristotle says, deliberates but does not abide by the result of his deliberation 'because of his affect' *(pathos)*, whereas the impetuous person is driven by his affect 'because he has not deliberated' (*NE* 7.7, 1150b19–22). In particular, Aristotle observes, quick-tempered people *(oxeis)* and ardent people *(melancholikoi)* tend to be impetuous akratics; they 'do not wait for reason, since they tend to follow appearance'—the quick-tempered because of the urgency *(tachutēs)* of their impulses, and the ardent because of the intensity of their impulses (*NE* 7.7, 1150b25–8).

In saying that the quick-tempered and the ardent fail to 'wait for reason', Aristotle probably wants to say that they do not pause to reflect on their action, or to calculate its consequences. However, the quick-tempered and the ardent who are described as driven by their affect 'because they have not deliberated' also fail to deliberate in the sense that they do not, on the occasion on which they yield to impetuousness, act on their choice. Both the impetuous and the weak akratics have exercised their deliberative abilities well enough to be credited with having the right choice; when weak-willed, they do not act on the deliverances of their deliberative effort.

Seen as a process of arriving at a choice, deliberation is an activity that modifies an initial set of desires and concerns which the agent brings to bear to his action into another set of desires which are wants or willings. This activity is deliberative only if the modification of desires can be regarded as a result of an exercise of reason.[15] Deliberation, as Aristotle understands it, is not simply reasoning that serves a practical purpose, but an effective direction, or redirection, of one's will by means of reasoning.

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[15] A transition from one set of desires to another can in some sense be a result of an exercise of reason, yet not be deliberation. An activity of designing computer programs might lead to a person's desire to give up his present occupation and do computer programming instead. Yet this desire need not be a result of deliberation. If the desire to do computer programming is a result of deliberation in Aristotle's sense, the relevant exercise of reason is not just that involved in designing computer programs. The point of calling the relevant employment of reason 'practical' is to call attention to the fact that reason in this employment specifically focuses on desires and their content, and does something with them or about them.

2. Deliberation 'is not of the end': the practical starting points

Aristotle repeatedly states that deliberation is not of the end, *to telos*, but of *ta pros to telos*—things that are toward the end, or, as this phrase used to be translated, the means toward the end[16] (*NE* 3.3, 1112b11–12 and 1112b33–4; *EE* 2.10, 1226a7–17 and 1226b9–12; *EE* 2.11, 1227b25ff; see also *Rhet.* 1. 6, 1362a18–19). Thus, for instance, Aristotle says, a doctor does not deliberate whether his patient should be healthy or not, but whether, say, he should take walks or not (*EE* 2.11, 1227b25–6; *NE* 3.3, 1112b12–13).

The claim that deliberation is not about the end has suggested to some that ethical deliberation is only about means, and not about ends. However, this view clashes with the picture that emerges with clarity elsewhere in the *Ethics*, in particular, in *NE* Books 6 and 7. There Aristotle claims, among other things, that choice, which is a product of deliberation, reveals character better than actions do. Instrumental reasoning is hardly indicative of character. Moreover, the overall picture of ethical deliberation and choice provided in Books 6 and 7 does not support the view that ethical deliberation is of the means only. To rely only on the few passages already quoted, if ethical deliberation were only of the means, its excellence could not consist in aiming at, and tending to achieve, the right goal.

The debate whether Aristotle in *NE* Book 3 argues that ethical deliberation is always about instrumental means and never about ends appears, however, to be settled. There seems to be an agreement among the more recent interpreters of Aristotle that as a result of ethical deliberation we choose not only the means to happiness, but also the ends, in particular, the constitutive parts of happiness. What settled the debate was in part the recognition that the phrase *ta pros to telos* does not refer just to instrumental means, but also to the constitutive parts of an end.[17]

However, even if this is granted, problems remain. If on Aristotle's view we deliberate about the constituents of happiness, then we do, in an important sense, deliberate about happiness as well; hence one needs to explain what he has in mind when he insists that deliberation and choice are not 'of the end' or 'about the end'. Furthermore, since the examples Aristotle gives at *EE* 2.10–11 and *NE* 3.3, are restricted to deliberation in the technical domains, a doubt may still linger in some minds that Aristotle models ethical deliberation, at least in *NE* 3 and *EE* 2, after technical deliberation.

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[16] *Ta pros to telos* means roughly '[things] with reference to the end'.

[17] Cooper (1975: 19ff); Hardie (1980: 256); compare also Greenwood (1909: 46–7). Note that this wider interpretation should not be restricted to the phrase *ta pros to telos*. This phrase is in any case equivalent to *ta tou telous heneka* or *ta tou telous charin*, 'things which are for the sake of the end'—see, for instance, *EE* 2.10, 1226a7–11. That the expressions *heneka* or *charin* ('for the sake of') covers constituents as well as instrumental means is suggested already by the following passage: 'we choose honour, pleasure, intelligence, and every sort of virtue both because of themselves [...], but we also choose them for the sake of happiness (*tēs eudaimonias charin*), thinking that through them we shall be happy' (*NE* 1.7, 1097b2–5). Honour, pleasure, and intelligence are not represented here as instrumental means to happiness. Virtue, in fact, cannot on Aristotle's view of happiness (*NE* 1. 7) be such a means.

A closer look at several passages from the *Nicomachean* and the *Eudemian Ethics* shows, I believe, what point Aristotle is trying to make by saying that deliberation is not of the end. *Eudemian Ethics* Book 2 is especially useful here:

> We deliberate not about the ends, but about what is toward the ends *(tōn pros ta telē)*. For the doctor does not deliberate whether he shall heal, nor the orator whether he shall persuade, not the statesman whether he shall produce law and order *(eunomia)*, nor does any other practitioner of art deliberate about the end. Rather they lay down the end *(themenoi to telos)*, and then examine how and by which means to bring it about [...] For a deliberator seems to search and analyse in the way described, as though analysing a diagram. (*NE* 3.3, 1112b11–21)

> Since the deliberator always deliberates for the sake of something, and there is always some goal *(skopos)* with reference to which he investigates what is useful, nobody deliberates about the end, this [sc. the end] being a starting point and a hypothesis *(archē kai hypothesis)*, like hypotheses in the theoretical sciences [...], but everyone's investigation is about what contributes to the end *(tōn pros to telos pherontōn)* [...]. (*EE* 2.10, 1227a5–12)

> For the doctor does not look into whether his patient should be healthy or not, but rather whether he should walk about or not; nor does the physical trainer look into whether one should be fit or not, but whether one should wrestle. In the same way, no other [science or art] is about the end. Just as in the theoretical sciences, the hypotheses are starting points, so in the productive [sciences or arts] the end is the starting point and hypothesis *(archē kai hypothesis)*. Given that this thing needs to be healthy, if that is to come about, such-and-such must be the case, as, in the other area, if a triangle contains two right angles, such-and-such must be the case. (*EE* 2.11, 1227b25–32)

> Nobody deliberates about the end, but that is presupposed *(keitai)* by everybody [...]. (*EE* 2.10, 1226b9–10 (Walzer and Mingay 1991; 10–11 in Susemihl 1884))

> Those who do not lay down some end *(hois mētheis keitai skopos)* are not deliberators. (*EE* 2.10, 1226b29–30)

In the *Nicomachean* passage deliberation, as a search *(zētēsis)* or investigation *(skepsis)*, is compared with geometrical analysis, in particular, with the attempt to solve a geometrical problem by recognizing that the figure in question can be analysed as containing, for instance, a certain kind of triangle. Now, if by pointing out that deliberation is not about the ends Aristotle were at pains to stress that deliberation is always concerned with instrumental means, it would be rather peculiar for him to invoke the example of geometrical analysis, which has nothing to do with means-end reasoning. But it would be equally wrong to assume that the reference to geometrical analysis indicates that Aristotle intends to present theoretical reasoning, or more specifically the sort of reasoning involved in solving geometrical problems, as a paradigm for practical reasoning. The point Aristotle wants to make in the passages quoted is quite different. The *Eudemian Ethics* goes some ways toward spelling it out.

The reason why deliberation is not about the end, according to the first two *Eudemian* passages quoted, is that the end plays a different role. It is a *hypothesis*—something laid down or posited. The end is what in the practical sphere corresponds to a hypothesis proper, that is, a hypothesis in theoretical sciences. The Greek term *hypothesis* refers to something that is laid down, posited, or presupposed—provisionally perhaps, but not necessarily in a tentative way. When Aristotle says that the end is a hypothesis, or that we lay down or posit the end (in the remaining three passages), he invites us to think of the end in deliberation as something taken as a fixed point. In order to deliberate, the deliberator has to hold something constant; there can be no reasoning or deliberation without presuppositions. In the third *Eudemian* passage quoted, *EE* 2.10, 1226b9–10, Aristotle directly links the claim we are interested in here; that we do not deliberate about the end, with this point about presupposition: 'Nobody deliberates about the end, but that is presupposed *(keitai)* by everybody' (or, 'laid down by everyone'—*not*, as Woods translates it: 'that is there for everyone.')[18] The line of thought begun at 1226b9 ends at 1226b29–30 with the claim (quoted last): 'Those who do not lay down some end are not deliberators.'

The reasoning involved in deliberation is not in fact hypothetical in our sense of the word. Deliberation does not consist in figuring out what would have to be done *if* the deliberator had such and such an aim in view. A mere opinion that something ought or ought not to be done is put aside at 1226b23–4, shortly before the last of the passages quoted, as a potential candidate for the starting point of deliberation. To say that deliberation is not of the end, but that the end is laid down in deliberation, is to affirm that deliberation starts from an actual practical commitment to some end. Without such a commitment there is no deliberation—those who do not lay down some end are not deliberators.

Deliberation starts with a state of aiming at a particular *telos*, and this involves having a desire for the object at which one aims. As the practical counterpart to the theoretical hypothesis—what we might call the 'practical hypothesis'—the end which the deliberator is committed to, the desire for which guides his deliberation, is an integral part of the deliberation. If the deliberation is spelled out as a practical argument, the desire for the end may be formulated as the first, universal, premise.[19]

What is laid down by the deliberator, however, is not simply an end, but a certain conception of the end. One cannot deliberate how to bring about health without having some conception as to what health involves and what sorts of things might bring it about (see *Meta.* 7.7, 1032b15–1033a1). A person is not a technical deliberator unless he is both committed to the end that defines his *technē*, craft, and guided in his deliberation by his expert conception of that end. Likewise, a person is not an ethical deliberator without having *eudaimonia* as the end in his deliberation and without having some (non-expert) conception of *eudaimonia*, which is presupposed in deliberation.

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[18] See Woods (1992). *Keitai* does the job here of the perfect passive of *tithenai*, meaning to 'lay down' or 'posit'—the very verb from which the word *hypothesis* is derived. This is a standard usage of the verb *keisthai*. Note that *keitai* is used in the same way in the passage cited just below: *dio hois mētheis keitai skopos, ou bouleutikoi* (1226b29–30).

[19] This does not mean that the deliberator reasons from that premise. The practical argument merely spells out in some form the content of the considerations that bring about the action.

In Book 3 of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, as well as Book 2 of the *Eudemian*, Aristotle focuses mostly on the likeness between technical and ethical sort of deliberation, but the likeness he wants to draw our attention to is not the concern with instrumental means. Rather, he is trying to explain what makes the reasoning involved in deliberation *practical*. What makes both technical and ethical deliberation practical is (in part) that deliberation presupposes aiming at a particular goal, and starts with a certain conception of the goal.

The differences between ethical and technical deliberation emerge when some issues are discussed that are not broached in the *NE* 3 or *EE* 2. The most striking differences are due to the role the conception of the end plays in each type of deliberation, and especially the sort of guidance that each conception provides. Once Aristotle has explored these differences, ethical deliberation will be seen to lie far apart from technical deliberation. (I will mention some of the differences in section 5 below.) The fact that Aristotle in *NE* 3.3, and *EE* 2.10–11 discusses ethical and technical deliberation in one breath is due to the evidently introductory purpose of these chapters.[20] He is working his way toward an account of the use of reason in ethical deliberation by comparing and contrasting this use of reason with other uses of reason: solving mathematical problems, figuring out what cure to apply to make a man healthy. These comparisons do not lead to the view either that theoretical problem-solving or that technical deliberations are paradigms for the practical use of reason.

3. Ethical deliberation and reflection

When discussing courage, Aristotle makes the following observation:

> Hence also it is thought the mark of a more courageous man to be fearless and undisturbed in sudden alarms *(en tois aiphnidiois phobois)* than to be so in those that are foreseen; for it must have proceeded more from the state of character *(apo hexeōs)*, because less from preparation *(ek paraskeuēs)*; foreseen acts may be chosen by calculation and reason *(ek logismou kai logou)*, but sudden acts *(ta exaiphnēs)* in accordance with one's state of character *(kata tēn hexin)*. (*NE* 3.8, 1117a17–22)

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[20] This is independent of the question of the order of composition of, say, Book 3 of the *Nicomachean Ethics* vis-à-vis Books 6 and 7.

On the other hand, we have seen that, according to Aristotle, virtuous action is chosen, and therefore deliberated. Moreover, ethical deliberation, in Aristotle's view, always involves a conception of the final end, the good life. At *NE* 6.12, 1144a31–3, he says that 'the inferences which contain the starting point of things done in action run as follows: "since the end, i.e. what is best *(to telos kai to ariston)*, is of such and such a nature"'. A virtuous person's deliberation, one might think, also has to start from such a premise.

The thought that the virtuous person's action ensues on deliberation the first premise of which states a conception of the good life may well seem to conflict with the quoted description of an unpremeditated courageous action which Aristotle presents as a sign of greater courage than a premeditated and calculated one. Some have sought a way out of the conflict by assuming that *to telos kai to ariston*, the end that figures as the premise of deliberation, is a more specific end than the good life. Hardie, for instance, claims that the end referred to by the phrase *to telos kai to ariston* is not the ultimate good, 'but the kind of end a soldier has in view when he sets himself to behave well in a battle' (Hardie 1968: 252).

However, this cannot be right. *to telos kai to ariston* is Aristotle's standard expression for the ultimate end (*kai* is clearly epexegetical here). And in any case, Aristotle believes that if ethical deliberation, whether narrowly or broadly construed, is to be carried out properly, it is of importance that the agent's overall conception of *eudaimonia* be available at every point during the deliberative process. It is not his view that one explicitly consults one's whole conception of the good life. Not all of it is explicit or available for scrutiny. Aristotle does not seem to impute a fully explicit conception of *eudaimonia* even to the practically wise and virtuous person. His thought rather is that one's overall evaluative outlook on the conduct of life should be on call in every situation of action.

Coming to a deliberative situation equipped with a conception of *eudaimonia* is not to be understood as starting with a large premise containing one's whole conception of the good life, 'Eudaimonia is...' and deducing from that premise what one is to do here and now. If deliberation *generally* speaking does not consist in deductive argument, there is no reason to assume that *ethical* deliberation starts from a grand premise specifying the person's general ethical outlook. The way in which deliberation involves the deliberator's whole conception of *eudaimonia* is best described by starting from an incisive remark by David Wiggins: 'few situations come already inscribed with the names of all the concerns which they touch or impinge upon' (2002b: 231).[21]

Human life involves facing situations in which it is not immediately, or even upon reflection, clear what is at stake, from the point of view of the person involved. A given situation will typically not activate a virtuous person's whole conception of the good life; it will activate only a part of it. However, which part is activated depends on what the whole conception is. A virtuous person's overall evaluative outlook is responsible both for bringing forth those features of the situation that he perceives as practically relevant in his initial scanning of the situation, and also for bringing about his specific response to the situation thus perceived.

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[21] The lines of thought I briefly mention in this paragraph are discussed insightfully, and at length, by Wiggins (1975–6: 43–4) and by McDowell (1980).

If this is a fair interpretation of Aristotle—as I believe it is—there is no reason to worry whether he represents ethical deliberation as starting from a 'grand premise' stating the agent's overall conception of the good life. He is not arguing that in acting virtuously, for instance, we *reason* from such a premise. If we are in the business of explaining an action by citing a practical argument, we may start with the grand premise—or not, depending on what our explanatory purpose is. In most cases, we are interested in what made the agent respond to this situation in the way he did; the story of how he came to analyse the situation as involving this or that salient concern is not to the point.

If one looks at a situation which has already aroused some deliberative response in the agent, then one can say, with Hardie, that 'the end and the best' is something less general than the agent's whole conception of *eudaimonia*. However, if one thinks of an agent who has just faced, or is about to face, a new situation, 'the end and the best' must be taken to refer to the ultimate good. But even in the first case, on Aristotle's view, the whole conception of *eudaimonia* is involved among what he calls the deliberative starting points.

A conception of the good life, which is the starting point of ethical deliberation, is a set of evaluative attitudes—from simple desires to more complex evaluative attitudes which involve a desiderative component, such as choices, practical concerns, commitments, and so on[22]—which, if their content were fully spelled out, would jointly amount to some specific picture of how one should live one's life. An ordinary person's conception of *eudaimonia* is to a large degree implicit; it is also usually vague and full of gaps in parts, not well integrated, and, more often than not, inconsistent. Nonetheless, it is Aristotle's view that most human adults have evaluative attitudes which involve such substantive valuations and which jointly amount to an evaluative outlook on the manner in which they should conduct their life.

Deliberation is ethical if the agent's overall moral outlook guides his perception of the situation in which he acts, activating this or that part of it. The concerns or interests that are activated by the situation are always specific. Yet, Aristotle, following in the steps of Socrates, has a holistic conception of the exercise of reason that backs virtuous action. Moderation, justice and courage are to some extent independent motivational propensities. Yet no single action of any kind is fully virtuous unless it is backed by an integral view of how one ought to go about things in life.

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[22] No claim is made here that these more complex evaluative attitudes cannot be analysed into beliefs, on the one hand, and desires, on the other. That level of analysis is in any case typically too fine-grained for ethical purposes.

The person of practical wisdom is in many ways not unlike the ordinary moral agent. He would not of course be practically *wise* if his conception of the good was inconsistent, or his conception misguided. But he is like the rest of us in that his conception of the good life is largely embodied in his dispositions to view particular situations, and respond to them, in certain ways. He does not reach his decisions from a carefully worked out scheme of values, which he simply applies to particular situations; his insight, Aristotle insists, is bound up with recognition of particulars. In some cases, a virtuous response demands an action that is unpremeditated and uncalculated, like the courageous action Aristotle speaks of at *NE* 3.8, 1117a17–22.

Yet for Aristotle the practically wise person is a far more reflective character than some recent interpretations have made him out to be. Aristotle attributes the correctness of the virtuous person's choice to reason, not merely to the appropriate direction of desire and emotion, if this is seen as not mediated by reason. Virtuous action requires a width of perspective, and articulateness, that is easily lost sight of when we get too focused on the picture of the virtuous person responding to particular features of situations as they present themselves to him in his own life. The sort of perceptiveness Aristotle has in mind when he speaks of practical wisdom as 'this eye of the soul' (*NE* 6.12, 1144a30) can only exist in someone whose dispositions to act are shaped by a use of reason that is reflective and critical. Aristotle describes such a use of reason in a way that lays stress on its social element. His discussion of two special virtues of the intellect brings this out.

The first virtue is *sunesis* or *eusunesia*, comprehension or good comprehension (*NE* 6.10). A person who has *sunesis* understands and assesses well what other people have to say about their deliberation and reflection on practical matters. Unlike practical wisdom, *sunesis* is not prescriptive *(epitaktikē)*, but rather critical, or concerned with judgement *(kritikē)* (1143a8–10). In exercising comprehension, one develops one's interpretive skills and skills of critical assessment that are necessary for conducting one's own deliberation well. Through exercising comprehension, one also gains access to other people's conceptions of the ends they pursue. These provide material, and sometimes the motivation, for one's own deliberation. Aristotle believes that especially in the beginning of our ethical development a reliance on other people's judgement is indispensable in order to get us going at all; it is indispensable, in other words, if we are eventually to come up with a conception of *eudaimonia* that is our own. *Sunesis* as a virtue, however, is not represented as relevant only to moral development. Someone who is capable of attaining what is best for the human being of things pursued in action has the ability to judge well the things others say about ethical conduct.

Aristotle's emphasis on the ethical relevance of *sunesis* throws some light on an issue to which he gives little direct discussion. This is the issue of the role ethical reflection plays both in the acquisition of one's conception of the good life and in deliberation. Deliberation is an exercise of reason which is practical strictly speaking; it is a process, or rather an activity, which directly affects desires and volitions. But one does not modify desires for the sake of modifying desires. The impetus for changing desires comes from a person's evaluative outlook. This outlook is not acquired only through deliberation. People think about practical issues in a manner that is not strictly practical in Aristotle's sense of the word; they reflect on their past actions, the content of the ends they tend to pursue, the relationship among the particular ends they go for. The direction of their deliberation is often affected by such reflection. It seems then that Aristotle needs to introduce here a distinction between the exercises of reason that are practical strictly speaking, and the exercises of reason the point of which is action as well, ultimately—but not necessarily directly or immediately. Although *sunesis* itself is restricted to thinking of, and judging about, what *other* people have to say about ethical issues, in attaching importance to this virtue, Aristotle implicitly recognizes the practical significance of ethical reflection. For, that exercise of intellect which is concerned with the conduct of life, but is not practical in the strict sense—being, as he puts it, merely critical—is or involves what we usually call practical reflection.

Aristotle appears to address the issue of ethical reflection in one passage in the *Eudemian Ethics*. At *EE* 2.10, 1226b25–6, he ascribes to the deliberative part of the soul an ability to contemplate the ends of human action. He says: 'that part of the soul is deliberative which contemplates *(to theōretikon)* the cause of a certain sort; for that-for-the-sake-of-which is one of the causes'. Apart from this passage, we know that he regards his own ethical theory, as developed in the *Ethics*, as practical. This seems to indicate, first, that ethical inquiry on his view includes both deliberation, which is directly or properly speaking practical, and ethical reflection, which is practical in an indirect sense.

The virtue of *sunesis* or *eusunesia* conspicuously displays a social element. It shows Aristotle concerned, as he is throughout the *Ethics*, with other people's appearances of goodness. The desirability of some virtuous actions is often revealed only to those whose vision has been shaped by what others have to say on the matters of human life. The kind of practical insight that Aristotle thinks characteristic of practical wisdom is also shaped by an understanding of others, as another virtue of practical reason—consideration or *suggnōmē* (*NE* 6.11)—reveals.

What is peculiar from our own point of view is that the virtue of being considerate and forgiving is classified by Aristotle as an intellectual virtue. There is no talk here about the emotion of compassion, but rather about a correct discrimination *(krisis orthē)* of what is decent or equitable *(tou epieikous)*, 1143a20. Understanding the other person and the willingness to extend forgiveness is ascribed to a discriminatory insight of some sort (1143a19–20). This does not mean that the insight is based on some abstract principle of fairness; rather decency in dealing with other people, which is a characteristic of all good people, seems to be a matter of insight into particulars (1143a31–2). It is the sharpening of one's insight into the circumstances of the other people's actions, and into what moves them to act as they do, that leads to considerateness which tends to forgive. Yet the forgiveness is not unbounded: it is guided by a proper grasp of the other person, and a sense of fairness (which is another way to translate *to epieikon*, what is decent or equitable).

Sunesis and *suggnōmē* are attitudes of mind distinct from practical wisdom. They each display a certain other-oriented understanding, and are not immediately bent on action. Yet even if different in account, comprehension and forgiveness are found in the practically wise (1143a25–31). When we think of the practically wise person as someone who makes right choices, we have also to think of him as someone whose choices result directly from the kind of reflective and discriminatory insight that forms the core of *sunesis* and *suggnōmē*.

4. Choice

Deliberation is a process which, if successfully carried through, leads to a *prohairesis*, a choice or decision. Aristotle's notion of choice is the most original part of his ethics.[23] Choice, on this view, is a psychological attitude that involves both a belief and a desiderative state.

At *EE* 2.10, 1227a3–5, Aristotle says: 'It is clear that choice is neither simply wish *(boulēsis)* nor belief *(doxa)*, but belief and desire *(orexis)* together when as a result of deliberation they are brought to a conclusion.' The claim made here is apparently only that choice involves desire and belief, not that it is an attitude of some third, distinct, kind.[24] However, at *NE* 6.2, 1139b4–5, choice is characterized as 'desiderative understanding' *(orektikos nous)* or 'rational desire' *(orexis dianoetikē)*, which comes closer to suggesting that choice is a state of the soul that is *sui generis*, and not merely a combination of a desire and a belief.

The following, preliminary, characterization of choice, or rather of a chosen action, is suggested by the passages I cite below. A chosen action, on Aristotle's view, is caused by a certain kind of wish *(boulēsis)*, which we may call a (rational) wanting or willing.[25] My wish to ϕ is a wanting or willing to ϕ just in case the wish to ϕ involves a belief that my wishing to ϕ will bring it about that I ϕ. My action (of ϕ-ing) is chosen just in case: (a) it is caused by my willing to ϕ, and (b) this willing to ϕ is caused by deliberation.

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[23] The term *prohairesis* is used only once in Plato, at *Parm.* 143 c. Deliberation might well have been of interest to the Sophists (in Plato's *Protagoras*, 318e5–319a2, Protagoras claims to teach his pupils *euboulia*), but we have no evidence that they developed anything like the conceptual analysis of deliberation and choice that Aristotle offers.

[24] A similar claim is made at *De Motu* 6, 700b23: 'choice shares both in intellect (*dianoia*) and in desire (*orexis*)'. See also *De An.* 3. 10, 433a22–30.

Let me first provide the grounds on which I attribute this preliminary characterization of a chosen action to Aristotle. With regard to (b), see *EE* 2.10, 1226b16–20: 'choice is deliberative *(bouleutikē)* desire *(orexis)* for those things which are up to us... By deliberative desire, I mean desire whose origin *(archē)* and cause *(aitia)* is deliberation *(bouleusis)*'. For (a), see *NE* 6.2, 1139a31–3: 'Now the origin of action is choice—[the origin in the sense of] the source of motion, not that for the sake of which—while the origin of choice is desire *(orexis)* together with reason which is for the sake of something [i.e. which aims at some end].' The origin in the sense of 'the source of motion' is what later came to be called an efficient cause, or simply, cause.

Conditions (a) and (b) are well attested; what of the claim that a wish involved in a choice is a willing or wanting, as characterized above? For this, we should look at the discussion of choice at *EE* 2.10, 1226a17ff. and *NE* 3.2, 1111b19ff, where Aristotle argues that choice is a wish, but not just any kind of wish. Choice is said to be a wish for what is possible (not, for instance, a wish to square a circle, or a wish for immortality); for what can be otherwise; for what is in human power to do or not to do; for what is in the power of the agent to do or not to do (thus not, for instance, a wish concerning affairs in India, on the assumption that one has no connection whatsoever with India). Aristotle appears to be saying that a choice is a wish for what the agent believes is possible; what he believes is in human power, etc. See *NE* 3.2, 1111b23–6: 'Further, wish is also for things that are not achievable through one's own agency, for instance, a victory for some actor or athlete; but nobody chooses anything of that sort, but what one thinks *(oietai)* can come about through one's own agency.' The relevant kind of wish to ϕ involves a belief on the part of the deliberator that what he wants to attain by ϕ is the sort of thing he can achieve by his own agency. Why is a wish that is involved in a choice restricted in this way? We should first recall here Aristotle's concept of *telos*: I can wish for a victory for a particular athlete, but I cannot aim at it. In addition, Aristotle believes that chosen actions are caused by their choices. A part of his concept of human agency is that we in some sense know, or believe, that we are, through our choices, causes of our actions. Through a choice or decision we knowingly make ourselves into causes of our actions. Thus, when I choose to take a walk, my choice involves an awareness that my determination to take a walk will bring it about that I take a walk.

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[25] I take it that 'wish' is an appropriate translation for *boulēsis*—as, for instance, when we say that we wish to be immortal, or to rule over mankind—but the most interesting kind of wish, that involved in choosing, is in fact more appropriately called 'willing' or 'wanting'.

The preliminary characterization of a chosen action, as it stands, does not specify a sufficient condition for an action to be chosen. Suppose that I want to speed through an intersection against the red light, as a result of deliberation. Suppose further that, being suddenly seized with fear, I change my mind about this, still in time safely to stop before the intersection. However, in panic, I press the accelerator, and indeed race through the intersection against the red light. How would Aristotle deal with this sort of case? Observe that choice on his view is not just any combination of belief and desire (or perhaps, is not a combination of just any sort of belief and desire), but a combination that involves aiming at some goal. As Aristotle puts it at *NE* 6.2, 1139a32–3, the origin of choice is desire together with 'reason which is for the sake of something' *(logos ho heneka tinos)*. On his view, both the aiming to ϕ and the action of ϕ-ing are caused by deliberation, and if the action itself is chosen, the same causal process must be involved both in the aiming to ϕ and the action of ϕ.

A more precise Aristotelian characterization of a chosen action might therefore run somewhat like this: An agent's action of ϕ is chosen if: (i) it is caused by the agent's willing to ϕ; (ii) it involves the same state of aiming as that which is involved in the agent's willing to ϕ, and (iii) the agent's willing to ϕ is caused by deliberation. The fact that Aristotle's account of a chosen action involves a two-step causal story is not, I think, problematic. A willing caused by deliberation—a choice—need not result in an action. If the choice does lead to an action, he takes it that the deliberation which causes the choice also causes the action. The state of aiming involved in the agent's willing to ϕ and that involved in his ϕ are assigned to the same deliberative process. The causal story behind an action is unitary. The conception of the end that is the starting point of deliberation and leads to a chosen action is the same as, or is a direct causal ancestor of, the conception that is involved in the willing to ϕ that causes the action.

I have used the term 'wanting' or 'willing' to bring out an aspect of choice which is separate from the causal origin of choice in deliberation. The willing is a desiderative state of some sort; unlike mere desire, however, it involves a preparedness to bring about a definite state of affairs in the world through one's own effort. Aristotle's restriction of choice to such changes as can be brought about through human action, and through one's own action, has to be seen in this light. One cannot be bent on bringing about a state of affairs through action without implicitly believing that the state of affairs in question is of the sort that can be brought about through that very action (and therefore, through one's own action, and through human action). The question of the causal origin of this sort of desiderative state, which corresponds fairly closely to what we might call willing, is logically separate from the account of the state in question.

Why then does Aristotle not separate the notion of willing, which is implicit in his concept of choice, from the causal origin of choice in deliberation? The reason for this is probably that he regards the two as more than accidentally conjoined. We should recall here that deliberation for him is not necessarily a process of explicit figuring out what to do in a particular situation. Deliberation is a process that leads through an exercise of reason to a preparedness to act. The fact that Aristotle never considers the possibility that there could be a willing, or a choice, without deliberation, seems to indicate that he thought of the state I have called willing as essentially having its source in reason. If he did think of deliberation as a process of deliberative reasoning in the more ordinary sense, he would have been drawn to accept the instances of non-deliberated volition. However, working out what to do in an explicit way is merely one way in which reason can be exercised in determining what to do in a particular situation. Aristotelian deliberation covers this broader range of cases.

Aristotle does not ascribe what I have called willing or wanting to a separate faculty, the will. He does not speak of anything that could naturally be translated as 'the will.'[26] He does take it that reason in its practical employment gives rise to something we have good reason to call willings or volitions. That reason can do this is what makes it in Aristotle's view practical. If we do not think of the will as a separate faculty, but as an ability of reason to effectively determine action, we can say that the will in this sense is implicit in Aristotle's account of deliberation and choice. To this extent Aristotle is indeed a precursor of modern conceptions of the will.

5. The person of practical wisdom as the standard of ethical judgement

The claim that the *phronimos*, the practically wise person, is the standard of ethical correctness, is one of the central claims of Aristotle's ethics. I shall conclude my discussion of his conception of practical reason by looking into some of the reasons he has for making this claim.

Phronēsis, practical wisdom, can be described as a virtue of practical judgement. Whereas reasoning, in the strict sense of this word, does not aim at truth itself, but at the preservation of truth from premises to conclusion, judgement aims at truth itself. When Aristotle describes the *euboulos*, good deliberator, as

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[26] Kenny (1979) translates *boulēsis* as 'will.' However, *boulēsis* is simply a wish. One may wish for the impossible. Aristotle's own examples are a wish for immortality, and a wish to have a kingly power over the whole of mankind (see *EE* 2.10, 1225b32–4 and *NE* 3. 2, 1111b22–3). A different kind of example are wishes for what is possible but not (normally) attainable by one's own agency, such as a wish that one's favourite team win a competition (cf. *NE* 3. 2, 1111b23–4). These desires are not practical in any sense, and certainly do not amount to wanting or willing of any kind. Eventually, the word *boulēsis* will be used in the sense that warrants its translation as 'will', but it is not so used in Aristotle. As I argued (Segvic 2000), the term *boulēsis* was used by Plato's Socrates in the *Gorgias* in a way that picks out certain strands of the concept of the will. Aristotle, however, contrasts *boulēsis* with choice, *prohairesis*. It is in his account of choice that an implicit notion of willing is to be found.

'the person who is capable of aiming in accordance with calculation *(logismos)* at what is best for a human being of things pursued in action' (*NE* 6.7, 1141b12–14), he characterizes the *euboulos* as someone who, in addition to being able to reason well in the formal sense, has the virtue of good judgement about practical affairs.[27]

Yet practical wisdom is not just the virtue of having good judgement *about* practical affairs; the excellent use of reason that characterizes the practically wise person is itself practical in nature. An employment of reason is practical only if it directly affects a desire, or a complex psychological attitude which involves a desire, and thus has an impact on the person's motivation to act. The *phronimos* is someone who is as good as one can be at using his reason in modifying his desires, and in arriving at choices to act, with a view to living the best possible life.

To say that a person who has the virtue of practical judgement is the standard of ethical correctness may appear to be trivial. The *phronimos* is understood to begin with as someone who makes the right choices as the result of his excellent use of practical reason. But by making this claim, Aristotle himself clearly intends to make a non-trivial point. He defines virtue of character as a mean of some sort which is determined by reason, namely, 'the reason by which the practically wise person would determine it' (*NE* 2.6, 1107a1–2). His response to Protagorean relativism is formulated in the claim that things which appear good to the *phronimos* are, as a matter of fact, good (*NE* 3. 4 1113a25–1113b2). Aristotle's response to Protagoras indicates that he wanted to make his understanding of ethical objectivity depend on his account of practical reason. However exactly he wanted to do this, he could not defeat Protagoras by the mere notion that the person of practical wisdom is by definition an embodiment of ethical correctness.

Here are some considerations that motivate Aristotle's characterization of the practically wise person as the standard of ethical correctness.

(1) There is an element of irreducible subjectivity in Aristotle's account of what the good life for a human being consists in. This might seem at first surprising. One might think that Aristotle, as a staunch ethical objectivist, might have been tempted by the following two (broadly Aristotelian) lines of thought. First, the extent to which a person does well in life depends on how many of his worthwhile ends he realizes, and perhaps also on which combination of these ends he realizes. According to the second Aristotelian strand of thought, a human being, as a natural creature of some sort, endowed with the

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[27] The term *logismos* is intended here widely. A *logismos* in the narrow sense is calculation, especially of the arithmetical sort, but more broadly it is any activity of figuring things out by reason, *logos*, thus also an activity of finding out the truth in practical affairs insofar as this activity is a reasoned process. In particular, *logismos* should not be understood as restricted to means–end reasoning.

capacities characteristic of his species, does well in life to the extent that he develops and exercises such capacities in a way typical of the well-functioning mature specimens of his species.

These two lines of thought both draw on Aristotle's reflections about *eudaimonia*. However, on his view the good life for a human being is not a simple function of either sort. What is missing in these characterizations of the good human life is Aristotle's thought that a human being does not do well in life unless he lives in accordance with his own conception, of what doing well in life consists in. This conception has to be one's own, in the sense of being to a large degree a result of one's own deliberation. It has also to be one's own in the sense that it is not a picture of the good life one merely speculates or fantasizes about, but is rather a conception that is operative in what one aims at in life. If one is to give an ideal representation of the human good, as Aristotle understands it, it will not do to provide an impersonal list of worthwhile human ends (perhaps along with some description of the deliberative priorities that attach to these ends in specific contexts). Nor will a list of the specifically human capacities do (accompanied perhaps with a description of the typical ways these capacities are exercised by mature human beings). What Aristotle needs is an ideal representation that embodies the agent's aiming at *eudaimonia*, and doing so under a conception which is a cumulative result of the agent's own previous deliberation. An appropriate device of representation for an ideal human life is someone who does these things well, and that is the Aristotelian *phronimos*.

(2) Aristotle's characterization of the *phronimos* as the standard of ethical correctness has to do with the sort of thing a conception of *eudaimonia* is, and also with the sort of guidance such a conception provides in ethical deliberation. Two features essentially belong to ethical deliberation. Firstly, ethical deliberation is a procedure which is not guided by genuinely independent standards, and secondly, the conception of *eudaimonia* any agent—including the practically wise one—is guided by is incomplete.

Whereas the final end of various technical competences plays a constructive role in technical deliberation, such a constructive role seems to be lacking in ethical deliberation. We have some independent standards for judging whether the final end which defines a given craft (e.g. health or safety in navigation, seen as defining medicine and the art of navigation) is reached in particular cases. These standards are independent in the sense that they do not depend on technical conceptions of what health or safety in navigation involve, and how they are best produced or secured. We can judge whether people are healthy or ill to some degree independently of the conception of health which is involved in medicine as a technical expertise. Hence, in arts or crafts we can adjust our activities to the effects these activities tend to produce. These effects can serve as our reference point, since we have some independent ways of judging whether they are produced or not. By contrast, practical wisdom in some sense 'refers' everything to the ultimate good, but there are no fully independent ways of judging the sort of success in the conduct of life which *eudaimonia* amounts to.[28]

We do derive some independent evidence for the soundness of our valuations concerning the conduct of life by observing, for instance, what sorts of actions tend to wreck other people's lives, or make their lives successful. But, we take such an evidence to be limited in significance because it involves an external point of view, in other words, precisely because it is independent. Although Aristotelian '*eudaimonia*' is considerably more objective a term than 'happiness' is, *eudaimonia* shares with happiness the fact that it cannot be adequately judged independently of the agent's own perspective.

In addition, as ethical agents, we do not have anything resembling an effective procedure for deciding how to act in a satisfactory way in light of the variety of valuations that make for our conception of the good life.[29] In ethical deliberation, we have to work from both ends. Ethical deliberation is guided by the deliberator's general ethical outlook; this outlook may be regarded as that which is laid down or posited in a particular deliberative situation. However, the general ethical outlook may in a given situation point in different directions, or in no particular direction. In such cases some work on the valuations that go into one's ethical outlook may be necessary.

The agent's conception of *eudaimonia* contains valuations of unequal weight. Some parts of his ethical outlook are more important to him than others. Thus, deliberation may lead him to abandon a part of his ethical outlook in favor of another part, one which he is more committed to and less willing to give up. Conflicts in the agent's conception of *eudaimonia* are typically revealed and resolved in particular deliberative situations. Solutions to such conflicts can sometimes be reached without articulating the conflicting concerns and explicitly working on a solution to the problem. But some practical difficulties are sufficiently tough to require such an articulation, and may not be resolved even when the person's most carefully thought out evaluative judgements and his best deliberative skills are employed in an attempt to solve them.

In some cases, the agent's general ethical outlook will not point in any particular direction. The cases I have in mind are not of the sort in which the agent does not have any clue as to what is going on in the situation from the ethical point of view. I am assuming that the agent can recognize some of the ethical considerations that are of relevance to the case at hand, yet these considerations are not sufficient either for him to adopt a conclusive interpretation of the situation, or to move him to act in any particular way. On occasion, one has to make a stab in the dark in the hope that the implications of one's action will be apparent at a later point. Sometimes this is the only way in which one can acquire the valuations one needs in order to deal with the new circumstances.

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[28] For the Aristotelian idea that the ultimate good is a reference point of some sort, see *NE* 1.12, and especially the following: 'By not praising pleasure although it is a good we indicate, he [Eudoxus] thought, that pleasure is better than the things which are praised; and the god and the good are of this [better] sort, since the other things are referred to them (*pros tanta gar kai t'alla anapheresthai*)' (1101b28–31) (cf. *EE* 2.1, 1219b11–13). Although Aristotle does not say so, the thought that the good is a reference point of some sort is also Platonic: see *Phaedo* 76de, *Republic* 484c, and Segvic (2004).

[29] When Eudoxus speaks of 'referring' things to the ultimate good, pleasure, he might have in mind such an effective procedure. On Aristotle's view, such a procedure is not available to us.

Yet another situation arises when the agent finds that the concerns he took himself to be firmly committed to lead unambiguously to a solution to the practical difficulty that in the given circumstances strikes him as a wrong thing to do. Pondering over the grounds for this disparity may lead to a revision of the original commitment.

These remarks are meant to explicate the kind of indeterminacy which Aristotle believes is inherent in ethical deliberation. This indeterminacy is not something that only the agents who are not fully virtuous and practically wise have to face. The practically wise person is not someone who does not have to make a stab in the dark, or to revise his commitments; rather, he is someone who is good at judging when it is appropriate, or permissible, to make a stab in the dark, or to make an appropriate revision.

This brings me to the incompleteness of the conception of *eudaimonia.* The practically wise person does not have at his disposal all the valuations he would need in order to reach a correct choice as to how to act in all the situations he might face. We should not be misled here, again, by the fact that the *phronimos* represents a certain ideal. The *phronimos* can only be in possession of whatever his specific excellences—above all, *euboulia,* the general deliberative excellence—involve, since he is nothing but an embodiment of these excellences. *Euboulia* does not consist in one's being equipped with a full body of practical knowledge which would enable one to arrive at a correct choice in any given situation. Aristotle's conception of the good deliberator is primarily a conception of someone who, in addition to having some body of practical knowledge, has the ability to acquire the knowledge he needs in order to deal with the new circumstances he finds himself in. Thus, Aristotle thinks of practical wisdom as, among other things, an excellence of learning.

This leads us to another reason why Aristotle chooses to describe the *phronimos* as the standard of the correctness of ethical judgement. If he thought that possessing a definitive body of practical knowledge were involved in being practically wise, he could refer to that knowledge as the standard of ethical correctness. However, he believes that the virtue of good practical judgement essentially involves the ability to revise and expand the necessarily incomplete conception of *eudaimonia* which the agent has acquired to a large degree as the result of his deliberations in the very specific circumstances of his own life. Thus, it makes better sense for Aristotle to refer to the person of practical wisdom himself as the model of ethical correctness rather than the necessarily incomplete knowledge this person has at any point in time.

Aristotle thinks of his conception of the good practical judgement as standing in sharp contrast to the Platonic position on the excellent use of reason in practical affairs. Aristotle complained that the Platonic form of the good is not something that can guide human action (see *NE* 1. 6 and *EE* 1. 8). But Aristotle must have been aware of the fact that Plato intended the form of goodness to be something that is *prakton* in the sense of providing guidance for action. Plato took the form of goodness to be a *paradeigma* of some sort, a pattern or model, not only in the ontological sense, but also in the sense of being some sort of guide or reference point for our actions. He seemed to believe that if we knew the form of goodness, or the good-itself, we would be able to recognize what is good in all its guises, and thus would be able to attain fully reliable practical guidance.[30] His view might even have been that knowing the good-itself, that which he describes as truly good, cannot be understood independently of the ability to recognize what is good or bad in the particular circumstances of one's life.

However closely Plato might have connected knowledge of the good itself with choosing the right courses of action, Aristotle would regard the very notion of such a kind of knowledge as misguided. Complete and exact knowledge concerning practical affairs is not, in the language of *NE* 1., *ktēton* for human beings: it cannot be 'had' or possessed by us. What we can have, ideally, is a procedure for dealing with practical problems which rests on some knowledge, and which helps expand that knowledge to cope with the new circumstances we encounter.

Ethical deliberation, on Aristotle's view, is distinct both from the theoretical and from the technical employment of reason. Whereas the theoretical use of reason does not involve a modification of one's desires, the technical use of reason, as Aristotle thinks of it, does. However, a technical expert has the benefit of having some standards of successful practice in his area that are independent of his own expert conception of successful practice.[31] If this is so, then there is on Aristotle's view no *technē*, art or craft, of living well.

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[30] This view is suggested by Plato's *Republic*. Socrates in the early Platonic dialogues makes a similar assumption. When he proposes the view that virtue is knowledge, he seems to have in mind an all-comprehensive body of knowledge which provides an effective practical guidance in all circumstances of action. However, Socrates does not make it clear whether he thinks that such a knowledge could be attained. He certainly denies that he himself has the knowledge in question.

[31] For an insightful examination of the similarities and differences between the practical and the technical use of reason, see Broadie (1991: 190–8, 202–12). This examination reveals, among other things, that our grasp of what is involved in a technical expertise is in many ways not adequate enough to provide a firm basis for the comparison between technical expertise and practical wisdom.

Nonetheless, Aristotle believes that with regard to practical affairs, there is something he would describe as a sound procedure, *methodos*.[32] On his view, there is a way of going about things in life which, although it does not amount to an exact or complete procedure, does reliably lead to a considerable measure of success in the conduct of life.

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[32] Compare the opening sentence of *NE*: 'Every craft (*technē*) and every *methodos*, and likewise every action (*praxis*) and choice (*prohairesis*) is thought to aim at some good [...].' A *methodos* is usually understood by Aristotle's interpreters as an approach followed in a science, *epistēmē*, or a craft, *technē*, or sometimes even as the science or the craft itself. See for instance, Burnet (1900) and Stewart (1892). However, Aspasius (1889) already made an attempt to construe the term broadly. A *methodos*, I believe, is no more than a procedure, or a way of going about things, that is sound and to some degree systematic. This is precisely what, on Aristotle's view, the practically wise person has, although the procedure he follows is neither scientific nor technical.

8

Akrasia: The Rest of the Story?

David Charles

1. Introduction

While Aristotle's account of *akrasia* in the first three chapters of *NE* 7 (= *EE* 6) has been intensively studied, his comments on this topic in the next seven chapters have been extensively ignored. Many believe that Aristotle's subsequent discussion has nothing of philosophical significance to add to his brilliant, if elusive, remarks in *NE* 7.1–3. In this chapter I shall argue that this is far from the case. His examination of a series of issues in *NE* 7.4–10 develops his earlier account of akratic action in important and philosophically interesting ways.[1]

2. The background in 7.3

This chapter has been the centre of much controversy. Here, I shall merely sketch an account I have given in detail elsewhere (Charles 2009a).[2] It has three key features:

1. In 7.3, Aristotle distinguishes (at least) two kinds of *akratēs* whom he describes as follows:

> One [type of] *akratēs* does not have the final proposition (*protasis*) [that is, the conclusion], another has it and (while acting) says it but does not know it like the drunk repeating the verses of Empedokles. (1147b9–12)

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[1] There have been some exceptions: Dahl (1984: 144) noted the importance of the distinction between the weak and the impetuous, as did I in my discussion of parts of 7.7, 8, and 10 (Charles 1984: 156, 171ff); Timmerman (2000) commented on this distinction, as did Lawrence (1987), and Cooper (1999a: 277ff) discussed parts of 7.6. There are fine discussions of issues in 7.4–9 by Lorenz, Natali, and Bobonich in Natali (2009). However, they do not seek to establish detailed connections between these chapters and 7.1–3, or to present a view of Aristotle's account of acrasia in 7.1–10 as a whole.

[2] See that essay for a defence of the proposed translation of 1147b9–12.

2. The first type of *akratēs* (whom I shall regard as a woman) does not get to the good conclusion because she fails to use the information she possesses to draw it. Either she has not integrated that information into her body of knowledge or else she has but now fails to apply her knowledge to arrive at the conclusion. She is described as follows:

> The person [acting against knowledge] does not have or does not exercise the proposition that this is of that kind... (1147a7)

So understood, the akratic person who does not have or does not exercise the claim 'this is of such and such type (for example, chicken)', can grasp that this food is chicken but will fail to have or to use this information as part of her relevant body of medical or dietary knowledge. In both cases, the person may be said to know (in the sense of grasp: *eidenai*) that this food is chicken. But she does so *either* in the way a child does who has not yet acquired the relevant body of knowledge about which food is healthy *or* as an adult who has acquired it but for some reason fails to exercise it.[3]

3. The second akratic mentioned in 1147b9–12 (whom I shall regard as a man) reaches the good conclusion but fails properly to grasp it (although he properly grasps the premises and draws the conclusion). In his case, desire operates so as to ensure that he does not properly grasp the conclusion, even though he is aware while acting that he should not do so. He says that he should not eat this sweet while eating it.

Although Aristotle, I have argued, outlines this view in *NE* 7.3, several basic points remain undeveloped and elusive. Here are two.

1. Aristotle says little about the first type of *akratēs* and does not fully connect his remarks in 1147a7ff with the detailed (or 'physical') account of *akrasia* he presents after 1147a24 or with his discussion of those who are (for example) asleep or mad in 1147a10ff. Specifically, he says nothing about the role of sensual desire in accounting for this type of case.

2. He does not show how desire intervenes in the second case of *akrasia*, nor does he fully articulate the nature of this *akratēs*' failure to grasp the good conclusion. Why does this type of akratic speak the conclusion like a drunk (1147b12)? Aristotle's comments in 1147a31–5 are extremely brief:

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[3] This reading of 1147a7 enjoys a decisive advantage over the standard interpretation of this passage. It allows that the *akratēs* takes (or avoids) this chicken knowingly (*eidos*) and 'voluntarily' (*hekon*) even when he does not have this claim that (for example) this food is chicken as part of his body of knowledge. So interpreted, it is fully consistent with Aristotle's contention that all who (for example) akratically eat a cake do so voluntarily (*hekontes:* 1146a7, 1136a32–5, 1152a15f). For that requires them to know (in the sense of grasping: *eidotes*: see, for example, *NE* 1111a22–4) that the object they eat is a cake while they eat it.

> When one universal [proposition] is present forbidding one from tasting [sweets] and another [universal] is present [stating] that everything sweet is pleasant, and this is sweet (this [proposition] is active), but sensual desire is present, one [concluding proposition] says flee this but desire lead him away. For each of the parts [of the soul] can move...[4]

I shall suggest that Aristotle advances discussion of both these issues in the next seven chapters of *NE* 7, offering a more detailed and comprehensive account of the types of *akrasia,* which sheds light on his views on the subject as a whole.

3. Two kinds of *akratēs*: the impetuous and the weak

Aristotle comments in *NE* 7.7:

> There are two types of *akrasia,* impetuosity and weakness. The latter having deliberated do not stand by what they have deliberated because of passion, the former are led by passion because they have not deliberated. (1150b19–22)

Aristotle immediately adds a further remark on impetuosity, distinguishing the 'swift' and the 'melancholic' as two distinct examples of this condition. He says that while both follow their imagination and do not remain within the confines of reason, the former does so because of the speed, the latter because of the excessive nature of their desires (1150b25–8). There are, thus, two types of impetuous *akratēs* who fail for different reasons to deliberate.

Aristotle's distinction between the weak and the impetuous is not restricted to 7.7. In the next chapter, he returns to what is apparently the same contrast:

> Of the akratics the best are those who are driven out of reason not those who retain their reason but do not stand by it; for the latter are bettered by less passion and, unlike the former, are not without prior deliberation. For this *akratēs* [the latter] is like those who are quickly drunk and by little wine or less wine than most. (1151a1–5)

The first category (the ecstatic) are those who have not deliberated, the second have deliberated but do not stand by their reason because of passion. The second group resemble the weak in having deliberated, the first the impetuous as they have not (in some way) deliberated (although it is not clear whether the latter category include both the melancholic and the swift, or only the former).

In 7.10 Aristotle distinguishes the weak and the melancholic impetuous as follows:

> Of these akratics one is not prone to stand by what he has deliberated; the other is melancholic and does not deliberate at all... (1152a18–19)

In this chapter, akratic people are said to be like the practically wise in reason but to differ in their preferential choices, not to be like those who know actively but rather those who are asleep or drunk (1152a10–14). The melancholics are like the people asleep (as far as reason is concerned). In their case, reason is inactive, shut down. They are influenced by their imagination (1150b25ff) as are people when asleep (*Insomn.* 462a10ff). When akratic, they are driven out of reason. This is why the melancholic impetuous does not deliberate at all.

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[4] I defend this translation (*cum* interpretation) in 2009: 57–9.

The akratic agent who is not prone to stand by what he has decided is the weak. He, it appears, is like those who are drunk (*oinomenos*: see 1147b7–12). Their form of drunkenness is distinct from that of those who are 'out on their feet' or 'closed down'. Later they are compared with the young (*NE* 7.14, 1154b10), who are optimistic, trusting, and naive, not properly influenced by the experience of life (see *Rhet.* 1389a18). In the *Problems*, those who are drunk in this way (*oinomenoi*) are said to be braver than those who are not (948a29). Similarly, in *NE* 1117a14, some are said to be more confident in their prowess and more optimistic through drink (*methuskomenoi).* Their type of drunkenness is distinguished from that of those who are dead-drunk (*methuon*), incapable of sex (*Probl.* 872b15) and subject to visual illusion (see *Probl.* 872b4ff, 872a20). The latter group could not even take part in the battle, let alone act bravely in it! It is the dead-drunk (*methuontes*) who act involuntarily (*NE* 1110b26). The akratics mentioned in the present passage (*oinomenoi*) are 'tipsy' (compare the *akrothorakes* in *Probl.* 871a13, 875a32ff), slightly drunk, 'cheerful', 'silly'.[5] They (*oinomenoi*) are sometimes said to be ignorant (*agnoountes*) not because they are insensible but because they think they know something they do not.[6] As such they may be fully aware of what they are doing or saying. Their error will lie in their thinking that they know something they do not.

In *NE* 7.10, Aristotle continues his discussion as follows:

> The condition of the akratic people who suffer from melancholic *akrasia* is easier to heal than that of those who deliberate and do not stand by what they deliberate... (1151b27–9)

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[5] See, for this distinction, Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers*, 7.118: the Stoic virtuous drink in moderation (*oinousthai*) and do not engage in heavy drinking (*methusthenai*) so as to be the worse for drink. In Plutarch *Moralia* 672d, the Jews are described as taking wine on the Sabbath (*oinousthai*). Similarly, Athenaeus, *The Deipnosophists* 10.440c talks of some who taste wine without getting drunk (suffering from *methē*). In the *Symposium* 176d, there is a discussion of the evils of drunkenness (*methē*), which presumably do not attend moderate drinking at a well-run symposium.

[6] Philo, *Peri Methes*, distinguishes two types of ignorance: the insensibility of those who are dead, drunk, 'closed down', and incapacitated (155) and the ignorance of those who think they know what they do not (162). The latter may have beliefs about what will happen (for this use of *agnoia* see *An. Pr.* 77b18ff) which are either false or (even if true) not properly based on experience or reasoning. For a similar use, see *EE* 1229a18ff where 'madmen' who act bravely but lack experience are described as ignorant of (e.g.) what snakes can do.

The connection with melancholy connects the first group with one of the kinds of impetuosity mentioned in 1150b19ff. The contrast is now between this kind of impetuosity and the weak, who do not stand by their deliberation.

Putting these passages together, we arrive at the following portraits of two types of akratic agents.

Type 1: the impetuous

i. They do not complete their deliberation but follow their imagination;
ii. Some are subject to excessive passions (the melancholic), others to quick-acting passions (the swift);
iii. The melancholic do not deliberate at all;
iv. The melancholic are easier to heal than the weak;
v. They (or some of them) are less bad than the weak.

There are two types of impetuous *akratēs*. Those who suffer from melancholic *akrasia* (*akrasia* brought on by excessive desires) are like those asleep or mad: their reasoning capacity is not operative at all. Those who have quick-acting desires are different: the speedy intervention of their desire may prevent them from completing their deliberation, dragging them away before they reach their conclusion. Their reason may be inoperative but in a weaker sense: it fails because of the onset of desire to arrive at the proper conclusion. Their desires are too quick for their reason, leading them to act before reason has succeeded in getting to the good conclusion. If so, while in the case of the melancholic akratic, desire (or imagination) interrupts all deliberation by driving out reason altogether, it prevents the 'swift' from completing the deliberation he has already initiated.[7]

Both swift and melancholic akratics are distinct from the weak who complete their deliberation but do not stand by it.

Type 2: the weak

i. They deliberate, conclude their deliberation but do not stand by what they have deliberated;
ii. They are not subject to such strong passions as the [melancholic] impetuous, being overcome by less passion than most are;

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[7] Both kinds of impetuous akratic may fail to be 'deliberative' in the sense in which the practically wise (1140a30–1) or politicians are 'practical and deliberative' (1141b26–7). For the practically wise or politicians are deliberative in that they succeed in completing their deliberation by arriving at a good practical conclusion about what to do.

iii. They are less easily healed than the melancholic;
iv. They are worse than the [melancholic] impetuous;
v. They are like tipsy drunks (*oinomenoi*).

There are clear differences between the weak and the impetuous even though neither is persuaded that they should act as they do (1151a6–7, 1151a22ff), both have good principles and both are overcome by desire and do not act as they think they should (1150a34f, 1152a19ff). The weak are said to be in a particularly unstable state, affected by weak or 'slow-moving' desires. They are vulnerable to passing, non-insistent desires. Further, they do not resist these temptations even when they have deliberated. By contrast, the impetuous are not vulnerable to each and every passing desire but only to ones sufficiently strong or quick acting to prevent them either from reasoning at all or from completing their reasoning. Since they are vulnerable only to strong or quick acting desires, they are unstable in a different way from that of the weak. Further, they are led astray because they have not deliberated (1150b21). If they had deliberated (anticipated, stopped, and thought), they might have acted differently. However, this type of cure will not work for the weak: for they have already deliberated (anticipated, etc.) and still do not stand by their deliberation. The mere fact of getting them to deliberate will not be sufficient to cure them. They are like those described in *NE* 7.2 by the proverb 'when water chokes, what is one to wash it down with?' For they act in spite of being persuaded of something quite different (1146a35ff).

Aristotle regards the weak as worse than the impetuous as (i) they have deliberated and (ii) are defeated by a less strong passion. But why does this make them worse? One might think that the mere fact that they are sufficiently rational as to complete their deliberation makes them better than the (melancholic) impetuous. Equally, one might suspect that the fact that their sensual desires are weaker makes them more easily controllable and less threatening. However, Aristotle does not see the matter this way. In his view, the fact that the weak have deliberated and are still defeated shows that their reason (even when deployed) fails to control their desires (even their weak ones). Their plight indicates, in his view, that their reason is even less effective than that of the impetuous in controlling passion. Even when their reason is deployed to reach the good conclusion, their passions prevail. In these respects, the weak akratic is closer than the impetuous to the terrible state of those whose actions are not controlled by reasoning or by preferential choice at all (1149b35ff: see 1145b23ff). And this makes them worse as well as less curable.

The weak and the melancholic impetuous fail to be 'practical' in different ways. The latter fail because their reason (or knowledge) lies dormant at the time of action. In some cases, they will fail to recall a correct preferential choice they have already reached.[8] By contrast, the weak can go through all the relevant reasoning, arrive at the conclusion and still fail to be practical. Indeed, their reasoning can resemble that of the practically wise until they reach the final stage: the one which is either identical with or closer to preferential choice.[9] While they may fail to stand by the result of their deliberation (1150a20, 1152a18–19, a28–9), there is no ground to believe that (when this happens) their reasoning has been forgotten (or put to sleep). Indeed, it appears that it is present (unforgotten) when they fail to stand by it.

This latter point is important: had Aristotle wished to suggest that the weak *akratēs'* reasoning was 'shut down' completely (like that of one dead-drunk: *methuon*) when he acted, he should have made it clear that all of the weak person's deliberation was first present and then (at the time of action) forgotten. He should not have likened him, at that point, to the tipsy drunk (*oinomenos*) but to the dead-drunk. For the former will be aware of what they are doing and may (consciously) think that they know something they do not. Conversely, had the weak been like the dead-drunk, their condition, at the moment of akratic action, would have been the same as that of those impetuous agents who have previously considered just this type of case but have now forgotten it. But this seems an implausible result given the time and effort Aristotle spends on separating these two kinds of *akrasia.*[10]

The weak and the impetuous will regret their akratic actions in different ways. The weak can regret what they are doing while acting, while the impetuous can only do so subsequently (when they come to realize that they have acted against their knowledge). As a result, the two types of *akrasia* will be transparent in different ways. For the weak, regret may be immediate, while for the impetuous it can only arise later when they come to realize that they have acted against their knowledge. However, both will differ from the bad person, the badness of whose action may remain concealed (even to him) and who never regrets what he has done (1150b35f).

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[8] This is why both the weak and the impetuous can be described as acting 'against their preferential choice' (1151a6–7). For further discussion of this passage see Charles (1984: 141n36).

[9] I do not attempt to discuss here the relation between preferential choice and the conclusion of practical reasoning. I take them to be non-identical since the latter is standardly a belief (*doxa*) and the former is not (see *NE* 1112a3–4). Further, preferential choice is not merely the desire to do a specific action (mentioned in the conclusion) but rather the desire to do it for the sake of a goal (*telos*) one accepts. On the latter point see Charles (1984: 137–41).

[10] In this respect the weak may resemble the soft who escape pain (1150a26f). In not withstanding their pain (as others do: 1150a34), they will fail (it appears) to stand by the course they think best.

4. Connections with 7.3

Aristotle's discussion of impetuosity and weakness in 7.7–10 allows us to understand the variety of types of *akrasia* he mentions in *NE* 7.3. There are, as we can now see, two types of impetuous *akratēs* mentioned there in addition to the weak *akratēs*.

The melancholic impetuous

They are introduced in 1147a10ff in the case of those who 'have in a way knowledge and at the same time not have it, like those asleep or mad' (1147a13). Melancholia required medical treatment (1154b12f) as a bodily condition and is compared with a fever (*Insomn.* 461a23f). In it, the sufferer is prone to excessive desires which affect the body (see 1147a15ff).[11] In their case, there is no deliberation at all. Their reason is asleep and they merely follow their imagination.

The swift impetuous: 1147a1–10

Unlike the melancholic, the swift akratic can deliberate to some extent but still will fail to arrive at the relevant good conclusion. She may fail (in some way) to use some information at her disposal to arrive at the appropriate conclusion. She may use the major premise ('Dry food is good for a human') and the minor premise ('I am a human') to arrive at the (interim) conclusion that 'Dry food is good for me'. She may even employ the further premise that 'Chicken is dry food' to conclude that 'Chicken is good for me'. However, although she is aware that this piece of meat is chicken, either she completely fails to integrate this information into her body of knowledge ('does not have it') or else she has integrated it but now fails to use it ('does not exercise it') to arrive at the conclusion that 'This is good for me'. Although in the more general (or 'logical') discussion of 1147a1–10 Aristotle does not introduce desire as the factor which prevents these akratics from arriving at the good conclusion, his later account of the speedy desire of the swift *akratēs* fills the necessary gap. The speed of her desire is shown by its ability to drag the *akratēs* away before she has completed her deliberation. It leads her to take (for example) the sweet before she has thought through her considerations against doing so.[12]

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[11] The melancholic are discussed by Hippocratic writers, who associate their condition with persistent fear and bad humour (*dusthumia:* see *Aphorisms* 6,23) and madness (see *On Diseases* 1, 30.) Later Aristotelian writers, such as Rufus of Ephesus in the first century AD, emphasized the latter connection. See Pormann (2008) and van der Eijk's (2001) detailed study of Aristotle's treatment of melancholy.

[12] The Hippocratic writers describe some people as having 'swift' (*oxu*) souls when they judge quickly what happens to them and rush (*horman*) too quickly (*tachutētēs*) towards many things.

The weak akratēs.

The discussion of tipsy drunkenness above, suggested by Aristotle's remarks in 7.14 (1154b10–11), has provided the necessary background for its use in 7.3 in the description of the akratic who says the conclusion 'like the tipsy drunk repeating the verses of Empedokles' (1147b10–12). These akratic agents will not stand by the conclusions of their reasoning because they hold them like the tipsy drunk. They are later identified as the weak.

In 7.3. Aristotle compares those influenced by passions such as drunkenness with those who speak words without knowledge (1147a18–19), using young students as an example.[13] Young students can put together arguments, make long speeches, and may well be convinced (for example on the basis of authority) of what they have been told.[14] They can understand and present the relevant propositions clearly and lucidly. They may well think they have knowledge of the claims they put forward but they lack the appropriately based confidence (*pistis*) required for proper knowledge. When they repeat the words of their teachers, they are like those who have learned a script without properly assessing its truth. Although, when they make such speeches, the latter may believe what they say, they still lack the evidential support required if they are to have rational confidence in their judgements. Their failure properly to engage with the relevant body of knowledge will consist in their lack of appropriately based (or rational) confidence (*pistis*) in the truth of what they say.

The example of the young students suggests a way to understand the condition of the tipsy-drunk and the weak akratic.[15] Like young students (1147a21ff),

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See *On Regimen* 1.35, 101f, 124f. Extreme cases of this condition are called 'half-mad' (*hypomainomenoi*). I am indebted to Philip van der Eijk for calling this text to my attention. It suggests that Aristotle was calling on Hippocratic terminology in his description. (See also his discussion of the 'swift-tempered' in *Rhet.* 1389a9ff.)

[13] I am inclined to take the young students as cases of those who 'have and do not have knowledge'. They fail to manifest knowledge when they speak *because* they have not made the views they express their own (1147a21). However, since they have learned something (*mathontes*), they must 'have in some way' the knowledge they express (1147a12–13). While not all who say words that come from knowledge have that knowledge (for example: a young child repeating the proofs of Euclid), the young students (as described) seem to do so. Indeed, this is probably why Aristotle uses them and not young children to make his point. However, since this point is controversial, I shall focus (in what follows) on the case of the tipsy-drunk.

[14] *'Suneirein'* means connect, compose, or tie together. It is used non-pejoratively of putting together arguments: see *Soph. El.* 175a30, *Top.* 158a37, *Meta.* 995a16, 1093b27. Ross' translation of 'string together' is not well supported. Apparently pejorative uses fall into two categories. In one, the term is explicitly qualified in a pejorative way (with, for example, 'in one breath': see Demosthenes 18.308). In the other, what is criticized is the putting together of two things which do not properly go together (*Meta.* 1090b30, *Div. per Somn.* 464b4f). Neither shows that 'connect' itself has a pejorative meaning. For a somewhat similar, but less radical, view, see Burnyeat's suggestion (1980: 89n6).

[15] If the next sentence (1147a22ff) expresses an idea derived from the previous one (as *hōste* suggests), the *akratēs* (pl.) when they speak will be like those who lack rational confidence in the

the tipsy drunk will fail (in some way) properly to engage with the body of beliefs (or knowledge) they repeat. In their case, drunkenness will cut them off (for a time) from a grasp (or scrutiny) of the basis for the views they express. While young students lack the experience required to sustain any of their views (see 1142a20ff), the tipsy-drunk, while drunk, do not use their experience (or reason) to support their claims. Since belief (*doxa*) in Aristotle's account requires rational confidence (*De Anima* 428a20ff), the tipsy-drunk (and the young students) will fail to believe what they say. It is not enough for belief, so understood, that one is aware of a given proposition, holds it as true or says it while holding it to be true. One must also have rational confidence in its truth, properly grounded in relevant evidence which supports its truth.

The weak akratic, if he is like the tipsy-drunk who says the verses of Empedokles (1147b9–12), will lack rational confidence in what he says. This is why he does not properly have the belief expressed by the final proposition 'It is best to abstain from this'. However, although he lacks rational confidence in his good conclusion, he can still hold that claim to be true. He can certainly be fully aware of what he says. He can, indeed, both think it is true and think that he knows it is true. Like the tipsy-drunk, he may hold the relevant claim to be true while failing to be rationally confident of its truth.

Aristotle's weak akratic fails properly to believe that he should abstain from this sweet because he lacks rational confidence (*pistis*) in the truth of his conclusion. It is not that his concluding belief is fine, properly held, and securely grounded, simply failing to guide his action or control his desires.[16] Rather, his failure in belief is an essential element in his being akratic. Indeed, Aristotle appears to see it as a basic ingredient in his account of why *akrasia* occurs. It is because his weak akratic fails properly to believe that he should abstain from this sweet (in perceptual knowledge: 1147b15–17) that he acts akratically.

While Aristotle makes some progress in his account of the weak *akratēs* in 7.3, two crucial issues remain obscure. We need to grasp what the weak *akratēs*' lack of confidence consists in and how he is overcome by desire. These issues are, of course, connected since his being overcome by desire is (in some way) connected with his lack of rational confidence. The difficulty is to see exactly how this happens. However, while the discussion in 7.3 is incomplete, we can fill in some of the gaps from Aristotle's remarks in the subsequent chapters.

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arguments they deploy in their speeches (since they have not been appropriately convinced of their truth). The term *'hypokrinesthai'* (*Rhet.* 1413b21–3) is used of orators as well as actors (*hypokritai*). Since both engage in speech making (*hypokrisei*: 1118a8), a better translation of *'hypokrinesthai'* is 'those making a speech'. The *akratēs* need not be like an actor in any other respect: (for example) in saying something he does not believe, or in pretending to be someone else.

[16] For this type of view, see Kenny (1966: 166), Dahl (1984: 213–14), and Burnet (1900: 303). See also Charles (1984: 167).

I shall begin by focussing on the role sensual desire plays in leading to akratic action. In considering how the weak are overcome by desire, we can better understand their failure in rational confidence.

5. The explanation of weak *akrasia*: the comparison with *akrasia* through anger (a walk on the 'bad side')

Aristotle concludes *NE* 7.4 by claiming that simple (unqualified) cases of *akrasia* concern the same objects as temperance and self-indulgence and that all other examples, such as concern, anger, gain, or honour, are only akratic in virtue of their similarity to the basic case (1148b10–14). The basic case of *akrasia*, we are later told, concerns food, sex, and some other bodily pleasures (1147b26–8). Aristotle had remarked earlier that *akrasia* was concerned with the same objects as self-indulgence (1146b19–21), but now he is more explicit. It involves the necessary pleasures of food and sex. Derived cases of *akrasia* will concern unnecessary pleasures which are sometimes good and sometimes bad (1148a25ff).

While Aristotle is clear in *NE* 7.4 that there are central and derived cases of *akrasia*, he does not defend his choice of a central case. Nor does he show why there has to be a central case at all. However, in *NE* 7.6 he provides a consideration in favour of the view that *akrasia* through anger is less bad than *akrasia* through sensual pleasure. It runs as follows: the *akratēs* misled by anger resembles an over-rapid waiter, who charges off to the kitchen before he has heard the whole of one's order (1149a25–8). This *akratēs* follows reason in a way, while the one led astray by sensual pleasure does not (1149b1–2). Rather, immediately reason or perception says that something is pleasant, desire leaps to enjoy it (1149a34–b1). This distinction merits scrutiny.

In the case of sensual desire, if one discovers, whether by reason or perception, that something is pleasant, one sets off to enjoy it. It is not that one reasons:

This is pleasant... So, I'm justified in taking it.

In one example, when one sees something as pleasant one is simply drawn towards it (1149a34–6). In the other, one arrives by reason at the opinion that this is pleasant and then goes after it. The latter example resembles the case sketched in 7.3 (1147a34ff), if, that is, that *akratēs* reasons to the conclusion 'This is pleasant' (although this conclusion is not stated). His belief that this is pleasant will (in some way) generate a sensual desire for this object, which leads him to act against his good conclusion. Neither of these akratic agents think that they 'should' take (or 'ought to' take) the pleasant object.

In the case of anger, the akratic agent reasons as follows: 'This is a case of harm done to me or my friends... so, I'm justified in getting my own back.'

The perception of harm done provides the basis for her thought that she should retaliate (1149a33: *dei*). Of course, in her anger the *akratēs* does not wait to consider whether the harm done really justifies (in this context) her act of retaliation. However, she strikes back, as Aristotle notes, as if having reasoned properly that she should retaliate (1149a33–4).[17] Her case is quite different from that of those akratics (the impetuous and the weak) who succumb to sensual desire. Unlike the impetuous, she reasons to a conclusion which tells her that she should act in a given way. Unlike the weak, she is not led to act in a way contrary to a conclusion she has reached about what she should do. Rather the angry akratic's reasoning is precipitous: she moves too quickly to the conclusion that she should retaliate (which she takes to be justified) without properly considering whether she is really justified in acting in this way. Aristotle's subsequent remarks draw out the implications of this distinction.

The person who is akratic through anger does not plan ahead (1149b14–15, see 1136a25–7), and does not weigh up with whether or not she is acting justly (see 1136a33–4). She responds immediately to what she sees as harmful without assessing whether her reaction is justified or likely to be effective.[18] Aristotle contrasts her with an *akratēs* (presumably the weak) led astray by sensual desire who reasons extensively as to means and as to consequences (1149b16). Indeed, the weak *akratēs* can, it seems, work out in detail the injustice of what he is doing even though desire seduces him in the end (1149b17–18). However, the weak's reasoning in favour of the akratic course, unlike that of the angry akratic, does not justify him in acting as he does. And this is why his form of *akrasia* is the more disgraceful. For in succumbing to a feature which does not justify him (by his own lights) in acting as he does, he is led astray by something less connected with reason, less part of our rational natures, closer to the state of wild animals ungoverned by reason (bestiality: 1149b29ff). Since he does not see his action as justified, his is the central case of deeply irrational activity.[19]

How is the weak akratic, discussed in *NE* 7.3 (1147a31–5, b9–12), overcome by sensual desire? As Aristotle subsequently notes, this can happen in several ways. Sometimes reason plays a role (1147b1), apparently generating the belief that this is pleasant. Sometimes, one simply sees something as pleasant and pursues it (1148b34–6). Both cases need more careful consideration.

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[17] This formulation allows, but does not require, the agent explicitly to invoke a major premise.

[18] Her action may, of course, be the one she would have chosen had she deliberated. But she still is akratic even so: her action is not properly controlled by her reason.

[19] It is tempting to think that the other cases of *akrasia* which Aristotle mentions (*akrasia* through desire for honour, victory, money, love of one's parents: 1148a29ff) follow the pattern of *akrasia* through anger. Here, the various desires (which lead one astray) are grounded in the perception of value and are to this degree justified. Perhaps, had one fully assessed all the reasons there are in these cases, one would have acted differently. For one's motivation here is amenable to reason in a way in which the lowest form of sensual desire is not.

In the perceptual case, perceptual imagination by itself can do the work (see the use of *phantasia* in 1150b28). One acts on what looks pleasant (or good) not on what one believes to be pleasant or good. Things can go on looking pleasant (or good) even when one does not believe that they are. Thus, in one of Aristotle's favourite examples, the sun can go on looking a foot across (to me) even when I believe that it is not (*De An.* 428b3ff: compare *Insomn.* 460b17ff). But how does something's *looking* pleasant or good to me lead me to act? This question needs to be answered since, in some apparently similar cases, how things look has no influence on what I do. Thus, even though a straight stick looks bent in water I will still ignore it if I know that it is straight but aim to collect crooked sticks. Why are things different when something looks pleasant (or good)? The simplest account of this connection, consistent with what Aristotle says elsewhere, is for A's looking pleasant to someone just to be her (or his) desiring A. As Aristotle suggests in *De An.* 3. 7, 431a7–10, to see something as pleasant is to be attracted to it and therein to desire it. There is one type of activity which can variously be described as 'seeing A as pleasant', 'being attracted to A', and desiring A.[20] If so, when the akratic sees that A is pleasant, he immediately (i.e. therein) desires it and moves towards obtaining it (1149a35).

If the case involving reason is strictly parallel, the belief that A is pleasant will be a 'practical' belief, when to 'practically' believe that A is pleasant (or good) just is to desire it. The conclusion 'A is pleasant' will be deduced from the premises 'All sweets are pleasant' and 'A is sweet'. If the former is an expression of an agent's general desire for sweets, the conclusion also will be an expression of his desire for this sweet. Both major premise and conclusion will be practical beliefs. Instead of merely thinking 'A is pleasant' desire will accept this conclusion in a way that leads to action (*De Motu* 701a33ff). Desire will also accept 'All sweets are pleasant' (if the agent has a desire for any sweet) as it accepts 'Let me drink' (*De Motu* 701a32) when the agent has a desire for any drink. If so, in both perceptual and reason-based cases, the akratic, in taking A to be (or to look) pleasant (and good), will therein desire it.[21] A's looking (in the perceptual case) or seeming pleasant (in the case of practical belief) to the agent will be his desiring A. In both when reason or perception says this is pleasant (or good), the *akratēs* will therein immediately move towards obtaining it (1149a35–6).[22]

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[20] In Charles (2006) I take 'A's looking pleasant to S' to refer to the same process (or activity) as 'S's seeing A as pleasant' and 'S's desiring A'. It is important to distinguish between this process (or activity) and its content (how A looks: A's pleasant look). When S sees A as pleasant (undergoes the process) this is because of how A looks (because of A's pleasant look). [Compare: S takes P to be true (process) because P seems true (content).] For more on this issue, see Charles 2006: 37–8.

[21] In Charles (2006) I argue that Aristotle accepts varieties of sensual desire: some may involve how things look, others (practical) opinions.

In both cases, the weak *akratēs* will realize that his desires do not justify his acting as he does. When a 'practical' belief leads him astray he may think that he has some reason to act as he does but not a good one. When imagination is responsible for his action, he can simply be transfixed by the apparent attractiveness of the object before him. Here, even though the object is not one which he believes it is good to pursue, his desire nonetheless leads him to act without justifying his action in any way. The object simply looks pleasant (or good) to him. He lacks any (justificatory) reason at all for acting as he does. It is only in *NE* 7.6, in considering the worst cases of *akrasia*, that Aristotle introduces this case where perception (not backed by reason) leads the akratic away. For only here, in comparing sensual with anger-driven akratics, does he focus on the lowest, most animal-like of sensual desires.

While akratic agents motivated by pleasure do not see themselves as justified in acting as they do, they can reason extensively as to how best to obtain the object they desire (1149b12ff). However, in no case will they judge it best to take the object. For whatever the complexity or subtlety of their reasoning about how to gain the object they desire, they will never see what they do as the best (or fully justified) thing to do. For this reason they will act against, not in line with, their preferential choice.[23]

6. The explanation of weak *akrasia* (2). A walk on the 'better side'

So far, so good! But not far enough. We still need to understand how, in Aristotle's account, sensual desire diminishes the weak *akratēs*' rational confidence in his conclusion that he should abstain. If we grasp this, we may be able to see what his failure in rational confidence (*pistis*) consists in. We may also understand why (in Aristotle's view) there cannot be cases of weak *akrasia* without a failure of this type. If Aristotle did not address these questions, his account will be sadly incomplete. I shall consider two interpretations which suggest that he did engage with these issues.

One interpretation is an intellectualist one. According to this view, the appeal of the opposed course (taking the sweet) weakens the weak akratic's intellectual confidence that B is best to do. Confidence of this type is based on a proper appreciation of the strength of the grounds in favour a given claim. Desire, fear, or lack of nerve undermines the weak akratic's intellectual confidence in the

[22] An alternative (consistent with the present view) would be to represent reason and perception (in 1149a35f) as faculties which issue in the judgement that this is pleasant (where so judging is identical with desiring it).

[23] I develop this account in Charles (1984: 138–40).

conclusion 'Do not do this!' (1147a34f) by causing him to fail properly to appreciate the strength of the grounds he has for this claim. Like the tipsy-drunk, he does not focus properly on the reasons which support his conclusion. While he still holds it to be true, he does so with diminished intellectual confidence and so fails to know (or properly believe) it. There is a common failure of intellectual grasp in these cases and a common account of how that grasp is restored (1147b6–9).

This interpretation sees the basic failure of the weak *akratēs* as an intellectual one (such as not properly appreciating evidence in favour of one's conclusion) caused by the influence of desire. It exemplifies a type of failure that can arise (induced by drunkenness, stress, or tiredness) in theoretical reasoning (about matters unconcerned with value).[24] In this account, the akratic's desire for the sweet causes him (for example) not to attend properly to the grounds he has for his 'good' conclusion and leads him to take the sweet. Desire's success in achieving enables it to achieve. Two steps are required.

There are, however, three difficulties with this interpretation. One springs from reflection on the cases of *akrasia* Aristotle discusses in *NE* 7.6. In some (as we have already seen) weak akratics simply follow their perceptual imagination, acting on how things look to them to be [B looks pleasant or good]. However, as noted above, the fact that (for example) the sun looks small does not affect (as Aristotle correctly saw) one's intellectual confidence that it is very large. One's intellectual grounds for the latter judgement are independent of the size it looks to be. Nor are things altered if one also has a (childish) desire that the sun be a foot across. Intellectual confidence that the sun is very large is not, it appears, affected either by how it looks or by one's desire that it be the size it looks to be. Against this background, it is difficult to see how the weak akratic's intellectual confidence that B is best will be undermined by the fact that A looks pleasant to him. Perceptual imagination and the attendant desire both appear irrelevant to the degree of intellectual confidence he will have in B's being the best action. There would, at best, be a major explanatory gap in Aristotle's account (were he to have adopted the intellectualist view in question). He should have indicated, by means of a discussion of (for example) self-deception, how perceptual imagination succeeds in undermining the weak *akratēs'* intellectual confidence in his conclusion that he should abstain from this sweet. But this gap is left unaddressed. There is no suggestion that Aristotle is even aware of the need for a psychological account of this kind.[25]

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[24] Desires act as background conditions accounting for failures in intellect and leading to action only when the intellect fails.

[25] This is not the type of account which can be left to the physiologists, whose concern is with changes in the body (1147a16f). Interestingly, Aristotle only requires from them an account of how the 'ignorance is dissolved' not of how it is created (1147b6–9).

The problem just noted is particularly pressing. In Aristotle's account, the weak *akratēs*, unlike the tipsy-drunk, has enough grasp on his premises (his grounds) rationally to arrive at the conclusion that he should abstain. Unlike the tipsy-drunk, he is intellectually convinced of his premises, sees that they entail a conclusion, draws that conclusion and still fails to be convinced of its truth.[26] However, his condition, so described, is an extremely paradoxical one. If someone is (and remains) intellectually convinced of the truth of his premises and draws the conclusion (he sees) they entail, it is difficult to understand how he can fail to be intellectually convinced of its truth. Aristotle needs an account of how the weak akratic's sensual desire for the pleasant course undermines his intellectual conviction in a conclusion he has drawn on the basis of premises he still accepts. Elsewhere, in considering theoretical reasoning, he simply assumes that if a reasonable person knows two premises and uses them (*energein*) to draw an entailed conclusion, he must also know the conclusion (*An. Po.* 67b2ff). If Aristotle is suggesting that there is an intellectual failure at precisely this point in practical reasoning, he needs to indicate (in general terms) how desire can undermine one's knowledge of (or intellectual conviction in) a conclusion one has deduced from premises one knows (or is intellectually convinced of). Many (including, it seems, Aristotle himself in *An. Po.* 67b2ff) do not think that intellectual failure can occur at this point.[27] It is a major undertaking to show that it can (for example by telling a story involving self-deception). However, at the crucial juncture, Aristotle fails even to gesture towards the type of explanation that the intellectualist account requires.

There is a third gap in the intellectualist interpretation; it fails to explain why, in Aristotle's view, lack of rational confidence in the conclusion is required for weak *akrasia*. Why cannot his weak *akratēs* be intellectually confident that B is best while doing A? The intellectualist interpretation offers no account of why Aristotle should have thought that intellectual confidence that B is best was sufficient for action. It simply treats this connection as an undefended posit in his theory.

In these three respects, the intellectualist interpretation presents Aristotle's account as incomplete and undefended at crucial points. It is hard to believe that he would not have addressed these issues had his view of rational confidence been a purely intellectual one. Fortunately, there is another, less incomplete, account, suggested by his remarks in *NE* 7.4–10 and supported by his writings elsewhere.

The basis of the alternative interpretation lies in Aristotle's remarks in *De An.* 3. 7 cited above. It understands someone's taking something as good (or fine) as the same activity as his being rationally attracted to it in the same way as seeing something as pleasant is the same activity as his sensually desiring it. As Aristotle comments, 'when [the intellectual soul] asserts that they are good or bad, it avoids or pursues them' (431a16ff). The activity of the intellectual soul parallels the earlier case in which, 'when an object is [perceived] as pleasant or painful, [the soul] pursues or avoids' (431a9ff).

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[26] For grasp of the major premise, see 1147a5ff, 1147b14ff where grasp of the universals is unaffected by akratic passion. The weak akratic uses the minor premise (*energein*) and so must grasp it (see 1147a33).

[27] This group includes those who take knowledge to be closed under logical entailment.

In both, the agent will be attracted to the object presented as good or pleasant and desire to obtain it.[28] When all goes well, and she concludes on the basis of her reasoning that she should do B, she will be rationally convinced that she should do B. Her rational conviction will consist in her being properly attracted to doing B. In the case of the weak akratic, by contrast, his lack of rational confidence (*pistis*) will consist in his not being properly attracted to doing what he concludes he should do. It will not be (as in the first interpretation) that he simply fails intellectually to appreciate the strength of the grounds which favour the truth of his conclusion. Rather, his failure is one in 'practical' opinion, a distinctive desire-involving type of opinion which can equally be represented as a failure in intellect-involving desire.[29] Let me spell out the exegetical advantages of this interpretation in more detail.

If the relevant type of rational confidence that B is best essentially consists in being attracted to B, it is easy to see how the weak akratic will come to be less attracted to B under the influence of the attractions (real or apparent) of another course. Rational confidence of this type is vulnerable to being adversely affected by desires for other options which he finds attractive. The more the other course attracts him, the less he is attracted to the better course. There is no need for a complex, subterranean, causal story (offered by the intellectualist account) in which desires influence purely intellectual judgements through self-deception, and so on. As is suggested by Aristotle's simple narrative (in 1147a34–5), sensual desire directly undermines the weak akratic's practical opinion that B is best by reducing his desire-involving rational commitment to this conclusion. Sensual desire for A weakens his desire-involving confidence that B is best. Doing B, in these circumstances, loses its attractions for him. This can be so whether the less good course merely looks pleasant (and good) to him or he believes it to be so. For it is his desire for A, not how it is best expressed, that undermines his confidence in his conclusion that B is best. In this account, in seeing A as attractive, sensual desire both makes B appear a less attractive option (if done instead of A) and leads the weak akratic to do A. Desire can have both these effects at the same time in a simple and easily intelligibly way. There is no need for the two separate stages, one involving (for example) self-deception, which the intellectualist interpreter needs to 'read between the lines' of 1147a34–5.

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[28] I set out this account in more detail in Charles (2006) and (2007).

[29] 'Practical opinion', on this account, is not decomposable into two different components: desire and belief. Rational desire is a species of desire which is based on and sensitive to practical reasoning.

Similarly, in 1147b15–17, sensual desire, according to the present view, will confront perceptual knowledge (knowledge concerning this perceptual object) and drag it around by reducing the weak akratic's desire-involving confidence in his 'good' conclusion to abstain. Here, too, there is no need for the complicated account devised by the intellectualist interpreter in which sensual desire (in some way) undermines the akratic's purely intellectual confidence in the conclusion as a prelude to its final success in dragging him away. Rather, sensual desire will undermine perceptual knowledge by rendering the better course less attractive to the weak than the alternatives before him.

It should be noted that preferential choice, according to the present account, will not be a combination of intellect and desire but rather a distinctive type of state: intellectual desire or desiderative intellect.[30] It is that type of grasping what is best to do which cannot be defined except as a desiderative type of grasping or alternatively that type of desiring which cannot be defined except as intellectual type of desiring; one focused on doing what is best.[31] From this perspective, when the weak *akratēs* fails in his preferential choice, his failure is one in a distinctively desiderative type of rational grasping. While his failure is *like* a purely intellectual failure (as both are failures of rational confidence), they differ in the types of rational confidence involved.[32] The weak *akratēs* can arrive at a preferential choice for the better course, but his choice will be inadequate because he is not properly convinced (in the desire-involving way) that this is the best thing to do. Conversely, those who are properly convinced will act accordingly.[33] There is no difficulty in seeing why rational confidence of this type leads to action (unless there is external obstacle). For it essentially involves being properly attracted to doing the better course.

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[30] Preferential choice (in 1139b4–5) is described both as a type of intellect (desiderative intellect) and as a type of desire (intellectual desire). The distinctive type of desire required for action (*praxis*) will be reason-involving 'through and through', essentially governed by practical reasoning (whose steps it accepts). Similarly, practical intellect will be marked out as desire-involving through and through, beginning from desired goals and ending with desired actions (see *De Anima* 433a23ff, further discussed in Charles 2006: 31ff).

[31] I discuss in Charles (2006) an extension of this view to the kind of grasp the practically wise have on their goals. Aristotle takes this to be both a kind of desire (wish) and a kind of intellectual grasp (judgement: 1142b31ff). Any tension will be resolved if one takes their grasp on their goals to be a desire-involving one and the type of desire to be an intellectual one.

[32] When his sensual desire diminishes, the weak akratic agent will recover his confidence in his good conclusion (1147b6–9). The account of how diminution (or increase) of sensual desire affects his body (see 1147a15–17) and so alters his rational confidence is a 'physiological' one. Aristotle suggests this account will be the same (at least in general terms) as that of how drunkenness or sleep affect the body and so alter the person's rational confidence (or knowledge). There will be the same type of explanation in all these cases: a passion affects the body and so alters the agent's rational confidence.

[33] The self-controlled, like the practically wise, will remain rationally convinced that they should do the best action. They differ in that the practically wise have (in some way) achieved (i) a higher degree of integration between their goals and their desires or (ii) a better grasp on their goal (or perhaps both). There are important issues here which require separate treatment.

The interpretation, just sketched, avoids problems which beset the intellectualist account and offers a simple and straightforward account of a number of passages in *NE* 7.4–10. I shall consider three.

> 1. The *akratēs* differ from the practically wise in preferential choice. For he is not like one who knows actively but like one who is asleep or drunk (*oinomenos*). (1151b14–16)

Here, Aristotle directly connects his remarks about preferential choice with his earlier comments on knowledge failure. The passage suggests that the relevant difference in preferential choice *is* a difference in knowledge state. This will be true if the failure in rational confidence of the weak *akratēs* is a failure to be properly attracted to the better course. For then, in failing in confidence in his conclusion that B is best, he will also fail to form an adequate preferential choice to do B. For the latter failure will consist in the selfsame type of failure to be properly attracted to doing B. By contrast, according to the intellectualist account, the weak *akratēs*' failure of knowledge will be the cause of the failure of desire, reflected in his lack of a good preferential choice. As before, the intellectualist interpreter has to conjure up (with no textual support) an 'underground' causal connection to make the text fit his account. It is far simpler to take the failure in intellect mentioned here just to be a failure in choice.

> 2. The impetuous do not stay true to reason because they have quick or excessive desires, because they are prone to follow their imagination. (1150b27ff)

It is not immediately clear whether people have strong or quick acting desires because they are prone (intellectually) to follow their imaginations (as in the intellectualist picture) or whether their being prone to follow their imagination consists in their having desires of this kind (as in the second). However, the first interpretation depends on devising (and attributing to Aristotle) an intellectualist account of following one's imagination which can serve as the cause (or possibly the effect) of their having quick-acting or strong desires. But this is a difficult task which, as before, there is no sign of Aristotle's undertaking in this passage or elsewhere. The alternative, by contrast, faces none of these problems as it presents following one's imagination as being (in these cases) the same thing as having rogue desires (too strong or too speedy). Indeed, part of what it is to have rogue desires is to be prone to follow one's imagination.

> 3. The *akratēs* is the kind of man to pursue bodily pleasures which are excessive and against good reason not because he has been convinced that this is the right thing to do.... [rather he] is one who stands outside reason, one whose passion overcomes to the extent he does not act in accordance with good reason but not to the extent that he is convinced that he should pursue without restraint such pleasures. (1151a11ff)

In this passage, the *akratēs* is said not to be convinced that he is acting correctly when (for example) taking the sweet. The self-indulgent, by contrast, is convinced that he should pursue pleasures and he does not regret (for example) taking the sweet (1150b29–30). Why is conviction connected in this way with lack of regret? On the present interpretation, this connection is explained simply: to be convinced in this way is to be attracted to acting on these goals. The self-indulgent, thus attracted to his goals, experiences no regret in acting to achieve them. On the intellectualist account, by contrast, purely intellectual conviction must cause (or perhaps be caused by) lack of regret (and the emotional states that go with it). But, if Aristotle had taken this view, he should have indicated (at least in outline) how the relevant causal connection is to work. For it is not at all obvious that intellectual conviction must bring with it either emotional integration or absence of regret.

One of the problems Aristotle sets out in 7.2 can be resolved if he rejects the purely intellectual account of confidence. The problem arises as follows:

> The person who acts, pursuing and preferring pleasures, having been persuaded, might seem to be better than one whom acts not through calculation but *akrasia*. For he would be more easily healed through being persuaded to the contrary. (1146a31ff)

But this seems absurd. The self-indulgent is clearly taken to be worse than the akratic, a case of vice not just of criticizable error (1148a2ff, 1148b1ff). Nor is self-indulgence easily remedied as it would be if it were simply a matter of intellectual conviction. For such conviction could be altered by force of argument alone (that is, unless there is, once again, a complex causal account explaining why intellectual change is hard to achieve if one still desires to (for example) eat the sweets). By contrast, desire-involving conviction will be hard to change by reason alone simply because, as Aristotle frequently remarks, such features of one's nature are intractable to rational argument (1105a1–12, 1179b11ff). The problem sketched in 7.2 only arises if one is drawn to an intellectualist account of rational confidence. Aristotle's strategy, I have suggested, is to reject the intellectualist assumptions that underlie the *aporia*.

7. Two specific conclusions and a more general observation

There are two conclusions to be drawn from this discussion which address the gaps noted in section 2 above.

1. The two types of *akratēs* introduced in 7.3 are characterized more fully in 7.4–10. The impetuous do not complete their deliberation, the weak arrive at the conclusion of their deliberation but do not stand by it. The former are like people asleep (with regard to the conclusion), the latter those who grasp it in the way the drunk does who says the verses of Empedokles. The presence of

these more detailed sketches of the weak and the impetuous strongly supports the view that there are two distinct types of *akratēs* in 7.3.

There is some variety within the class of the impetuous: some, the melancholic, do not deliberate at all (do not use the information at their disposal in reasoning) while others, the swift, only deliberate to some degree. While both are precipitous, they both differ from those who are akratic through anger and alone think that they are justified in acting as they do.

It is clear, in the light of the variety of cases of *akrasia* discussed in 7.1–10, that Aristotle is not simply considering the phenomenon of acting against one's reason (or better judgement). His attention is rather on a range of cases where reason fails properly to control what one does. The impetuous and the angry fail in this respect as much as do the weak (who do act against their better judgement). We should conclude that the accepted use of '*akrasia*' in English (taken as applying only to acting against one's better judgement) corresponds poorly to the Greek term '*akrasia*'. The phenomenon Aristotle studies under the latter title extends more widely than *akrasia* (as we understand it) to include states we might describe as 'being out of control', 'losing it', or 'being beside oneself with anger'.

2. In the case of (weak) *akrasia* precipitated by sensual desire, the agent has no reason or justification (by his own lights) for acting as he does. In the worst (most animal-like) case, the *akratēs* merely sees something as pleasant and goes for it. His motivation resembles that of animals whose action is guided simply by perceptual imagination of what is pleasant. In other cases, the weak may have a 'practical belief' in favour of doing A (for example A is pleasant or good) although he also thinks that B is better than A. However, in both the akratic agent pursues the object without having a justification (by his own lights) for doing so. In both cases the weak *akratēs* can be said to be motivated by the *epithumetic* part of the soul as the belief or imagination involved is pleasure-directed and does not involve a reasoned-based better judgement (1147a35: see 1102b16ff, 1119b15ff).[34]

According to the interpretation just given, Aristotle's weak akratic's rational confidence that he should do the best action is undermined by the influence of the opposed desire for the sweet. His failure in rational confidence is a failure in a specific desire-involving mode of confidence. Under the influence of sensual desire, he ceases to be properly attracted to the better course and is led to take the pleasant option. This account, which is consistent with Aristotle's remarks elsewhere, allows us to give a simple and straightforward reading of some of the crucial texts in *NE* 7.4–10 which expand on Aristotle's fragmentary comments in *NE* 7.3(1147a31–4)

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[34] On this account, sensual desire can be grounded in either imagination or belief (*doxa*). There is no need to insist either that all sensual desires are imagination-based or that they are all belief-based. There can, as we have seen, be cases of both. For an apparently contrasting view, see Cooper (1999b: 242–3). He takes all sensual desires to involve value judgements and value thoughts of the same general type.

Aristotle's analysis of weak *akrasia*, so understood, is a distinctive one, representing an alternative to the ways in which this problem is traditionally framed. I shall conclude by commenting on two of its distinguishing features.

1. Aristotle can agree with intellectualist writers that the weak *akratēs* does not fully understand or sincerely believe that B is the best thing to do, if he does something else. But he can equally agree with their opponents that the weak *akratēs* does not suffer a purely intellectual fault in her understanding that B is best. He can accept both viewpoints because he sees the weak as failing to have proper practical understanding that B is best. While his failure can be presented as a failure of understanding, it is not a purely intellectual failure in his cognition of reponse-independent features of reality.

2. Aristotle can agree with intellectualist writers that practical reasoning (by itself) leads to action and with their opponents that without desire (or some motivational state other than mere belief) thought does not move us. He can accept both viewpoints because the states which are essentially involved in practical reasoning are (on his account) best understood as ways of responding to what is of value.[35] This mode of response cannot be understood except in terms of being attracted to act in a given way and so is not merely a belief or cognition (as in the intellectualist account) but neither can it be broken down (as by their two-component opponents) into two independent components (intellectual belief + desire).

Since Hume, many writers have thought that one has to choose, in this area, between intellectualism and a version of the two-component account (just introduced). Intellectualists maintain that the moral agent is motivated to act solely (or fundamentally) because of her 'recognition' or understanding that A is good (or best), while characterizing recognition and understanding in terms

[35] This may sound like a form of prescriptivism. But note the following differences: Aristotle is not seeking to analyse the predicate 'x is good' in terms of a mode of acceptance of the relevant proposition.

For Aristotle, outside the context of practical reasoning, one can describe something as 'good' (in the context of understanding: 1143a10ff) without being attracted to acting accordingly oneself. Thus, for example, he can describe the activities of the Unmoved Mover as good in a non action-guiding mode.

While practical wisdom is prescriptive (1143a8), this marks an achievement on the part of the practically wise. For they have ensured that they know (in the appropriate mode) what is to be done. By contrast, the weak *akratēs*, who lacks such knowledge, will understand (in the way specified) that A is good, but will not act accordingly. Although she grasps (in some way) that A is good, she fails to act.

appropriate to the intellectual understanding of any factual matter.[36] In their view, the weak akratic fails properly to understand (in purely intellectual terms) what they should do. Their opponents, holding (plausibly enough) that intellectual understanding is not sufficient to account for action, add desire as a separate, independent, state which (in their view) rebels when the agent acts akratically. Aristotle (as I have interpreted him) rejects the conception of the alternatives which underlies this debate. In his view, there is a form of practical understanding, irreducible to purely intellectual cognition, which essentially involves being attracted to doing what is best and is not decomposable into two independent components. Practical understanding (of this type) that B is best is particularly vulnerable (as is shown by the plight of the weak *akratēs*) to the attractions of pleasant alternatives.

It would be a major project to establish that Aristotle held this view of practical understanding, requiring consideration of his views on practical reasoning, practical wisdom, virtue, and self-control.[37] It would be an even larger one to attempt to show that this view is philosophically defensible. My present aim has been merely to suggest that his discussion of *akrasia* in *NE* 7.4–10, when taken with some of his remarks elsewhere, points to an account of these issues not dreamed of by most post-Humean philosophers and commentators.[38]

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[36] For an exceptionally clear statement of this understanding of the options, see Foot (1995).

[37] Although it is only in this way that the present interpretation could be secured.

[38] I am indebted to Ursula Coope, Jane Hood, Jessica Moss, Carlo Natali, Michael Pakaluk, Giles Pearson, and Gabriel Richardson Lear for their comments on an earlier version of this paper. I was also helped by many participants at the European Society for Ancient Philosophy Conference held on *NE* 7.6 in Delphi in 1998.

9

Mixed Actions and Double Effect

Michael Pakaluk

The goal of this chapter is to examine the account of 'mixed' or 'necessitated' actions in *NE* 3.1, to see whether Aristotle's discussion there provides an analogue or anticipation of the so-called 'doctrine of double effect' (DE). This project will, I hope, prove illuminating as regards both mixed actions and DE.

1. Double effect

To fix ideas, we need a statement of DE. The precise way in which DE should be characterized, and the philosophical significance of the doctrine, are both controversial. Nonetheless, for our purposes a standard formulation will suffice, according to which there is a difference between the bad consequences that an agent *directly* brings about through his action and those that he brings about *indirectly* and in the manner of a by-product; and, given that certain conditions are satisfied, the agent is not to be faulted for the latter. Those conditions are thought to be the following:

(1) His action which has those bad consequences is not itself impermissible, unlawful, or 'inherently wrong': in particular, there is an identifiable action of the sort one is doing in this instance, which one might do in various other circumstances without reproach, and where there is no question of bad consequences following from it;

(2) He does not do his action *in order to attain* those bad consequences: in particular, if he could do his action in such a way that, or in circumstances such that, the bad consequences would not follow, then he would (and the best evidence that he would, is that reliably in other circumstances he does);

(3) There is a suitable 'proportion' (as it is said) between the good consequences of his action and the bad, such that it makes sense or seems reasonable that he

would do the action for those good consequences, in spite of its unavoidable bad consequences;

(4) Although the bad consequences of his action are unavoidable in the circumstances, the agent does not exult in, take pleasure in, or otherwise 'rest his will' in the bad consequences.[1]

Three cases which are commonly taken to illustrate the doctrine would be: killing in self-defence; the administration of a life-shortening painkiller; and the 'trolley problem'.[2] Thus, an agent who kills in self-defence may not be held accountable for the death of the assailant, if he uses no more force than was necessary to defend himself (which is a sign that condition 2 was satisfied); and he takes no pleasure in the man's death (satisfying condition 4); since he may rightfully prefer his own life to that of another, when he cannot act in such a way as to preserve both (that is, there is a suitable 'proportion' between the good which is his life, and the bad which is the assailant's death, as per condition 3); and defensive actions, such as those someone is trained in when learning to use a weapon, are themselves not themselves inherently wrong (satisfying condition 1).[3]

It can be seen from this illustration that the articulation of conditions for DE results from the supposition that an action is to be faulted if anything significant about it is to be faulted. Conditions 1 and 3 are such that they can be determined in advance and articulated in law, for example, in jurisdictions which allow certain sorts of weapons to be carried for the purpose of self-defence, and which permit in law the use of such weapons even to the point of killing in self-defence. Condition 2, then, would be the main condition which it would be up to the agent to satisfy, and for which he could be faulted in court, if he acted hastily, recklessly, or otherwise with poor judgement in presuming that it was satisfied. In contrast, condition 4 seems a condition that applies to the interior thoughts and wishes of the agent, and which would therefore typically be relevant only for moral assessment (among friends, or in the confessional) rather than for the determination of criminal responsibility or civil liability in a court. Yet evidence that someone had an animus against his assailant, and delighted in his death, would conceivably be relevant to establish also that, in violation of condition 2, he acted hastily and presumed that lethal force was necessary when it was not.

Again, when a suitably qualified doctor administers an approved drug (condition 1) to a patient suffering severe pain, such that the drug controls the pain but has the side effect of shortening the patient's life, then the doctor may not be held accountable for shortening the patient's life—it is claimed by those who apply DE to such cases—if he does not 'want' the patient dead, and is not acting as an agent for someone who does (condition 4); if there is a suitable 'proportion' between the good gained (the control of pain) and the bad which results (the shortening of life) (condition 3); and if there are no other drugs available, which might have been administered instead, which lacked the life-shortening side effect and which would have controlled the pain equally well (which is a sign that condition 2 is satisfied). If in such cases the doctor is licensed, competent, ethical, and lawful, and euthanasia is illegal, then every condition except 3 will be satisfied as a matter of course.[4] As regards condition 2, there are clear cases and borderline cases, not surprisingly. A clear case would be a terminally ill cancer patient on his deathbed, suffering from excruciating pain, where the only drug available controls the pain completely but shortens his life only slightly. Difficult cases can involve the choice of a drug among alternatives which offer different trade-offs between pain control and effects on the patient's consciousness and life span.

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[1] For an example of such a formulation, see McIntyre (2009). For a good account of the development of the formulation in the tradition of casuistry, see Kaczor (1998).

[2] The discussion of killing in self-defence by St Thomas Aquinas in *Summa Theologiae*, 2a2ae, q. 64, a. 7, is the first place in which something like DE is apparently invoked (and see Kaczor 1998). For additional, commonly considered cases, see McIntyre (2001).

[3] If he uses a weapon which is unlawful to own or to carry, such as, in some jurisdictions, a gun, then of course he may be held responsible for killing in self-defence *with a gun*, since in that case *defensive actions undertaken with a gun* would be unlawful.

The trolley problem as standardly conceived[5] is sometimes also thought to exemplify DE: the agent who steers the trolley away from the track with five toward the track with one is sometimes said not to be responsible for the death of the one on the grounds that this person's death was a by-product of his decision to steer away from the five. What he did (it is maintained) was to steer away from the five—an action which had the incidental effect of bringing about the death of the one. He acted permissibly and lawfully, since he had legal authority to steer the trolley and there is nothing immoral about directing a trolley from one track to another (condition 1); if there were a third track which had no persons standing on it, to which he could have steered the trolley, he would have taken that (relevant to condition 2); clearly it makes sense to prefer the lives of five over the life of one (condition 3); and we are assuming that the agent has normal regrets about the unfortunate death of the one (condition 4). Obviously, as the 'trolley problem' is a hypothetical and general case, one can imagine particular cases where conditions 2 through 4 would clearly be violated, as well as cases in which it would be difficult to judge.[6]

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[4] It should be the case that simply to say that he is a licensed doctor is to declare him competent, ethical, and law-abiding—according to a sound conception of professionalism. Of course a 'doctor *qua* doctor' (see *Rep.* 340c) aims, through training, to promote and safeguard health, and to relieve pain, and so it is easy to establish, *for him*, both that administering the pain-relieving drug is something that he standardly does for the sake of relieving pain (not ending life), and that he does prescribe drugs which lack this side effect when he can.

[5] See Foot (1967).

[6] One might imagine cases in which even 1 were violated, because the trolley was being operated in a jurisdiction in which, for example, it was forbidden by law for the trolley operator to depart from some predetermined itinerary. In that case, the trolley operator must break the law to save the five, and it might at least be argued that, in that case, he becomes responsible for

The four conditions in the standard formulation of DE might appear to be ad hoc and a hodge-podge, yet, as perhaps a consideration of the cases helps to make clear, they can be understood as corresponding to certain ordinary suppositions about human action, when an action is undertaken under conditions which involve some kind of necessitation. Suppose that typically an action may be understood as something done for a purpose: 'I am lying on the bed to rest'; 'He is driving the car to get to work'; and so forth. Then it may go wrong if either the action is itself in some way bad (condition 1) or the deliberate purpose is bad (condition 2)—both driving the car to get to the bank robbery and hijacking a taxi to get to work would be blameworthy—and also if the agent's subjective response to his action is inappropriate (condition 4), say, if he is inappropriately grumbling about needing to work as he is driving there. When someone acts under conditions which unavoidably involve some kind of trade-off, then it may additionally be wondered whether in his willingness to trade the one good for the other, he has shown the right preference (condition 3).[7]

The philosophical significance of DE will be considered in more detail later, once the comparison with mixed actions has been drawn. Here we might say that DE, although an old doctrine, in recent years has been thought interesting, first, as offering a framework for gaining greater clarity in deliberating about some kinds of ethical dilemmas, especially those that arise in relationship to the use of skill and technology (which typically involve trade-offs), as in medical ethics; and, second, as constituting a prima facie objection to consequentialism, which standardly holds that an agent may potentially be faulted for any effects which his actions brings about, and which would not allow that there are cases in which an agent may bring about both good and bad effects but not held open to fault for the bad effects.

2. Mixed actions

It might seem antecedently likely that there would be some kind of analogue of DE in Aristotle. After all, the origin of DE is traced to a passage of Aquinas in the *Summa*, in a discussion of the virtue of justice,[8] but his treatment there of

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the death of the one—on the principle that a lawbreaker is responsible for the bad consequences that follow from an illegal action—whereas if he had let the trolley follow its predetermined course, then 'the laws' or 'the state', not he, would be responsible for the death of the five (perhaps especially if situations such as these were anticipated by lawmakers, and nonetheless no provision was made for them).

[7] DE presupposes that the agent is free to take either end of the trade-off as his goal, and he acts well only if he takes the good end of it: killing in self-defence is a trade off—I cannot preserve both my life and the attacker's—and if I take the preservation of my life as the goal of my defensive action, my action is licit, but if I take the attacker's death as my goal, it is not.

[8] See note 2 above.

the moral virtues is derived from and highly dependent upon the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Again, in recent years DE has been put forward as an interesting principle of responsibility for action by Elizabeth Anscombe (see for example 1982) and others whose theories of actions and approaches to moral philosophy have been inspired by Aristotle. Moreover, although DE is usually cited in connection with extraordinary dilemmas which are either hypothetical (like the trolley problem) or arise only infrequently (such as ectopic pregnancy, or pain control in terminally ill patients), in reality the issues it deals with seem bound up with nearly every action—namely, whether and when inadvertent or incidental consequences of actions are to be attributed to the agent, and how responsibility is to be divided between an agent and another person, when that other person aims to coerce or pressure, and the agent either refuses to cooperate or resists;[9] and one would suppose that these issues would somewhere be addressed, or at least touched upon, in Aristotle's discussions of action and responsibility.

Yet if one is looking for an analogue, the best candidate would seem to be Aristotle's discussion of what he calls 'mixed' actions in *NE* 3.1. Four features of that discussion might lead one to think that what Aristotle is concerned about in his account of 'mixed' actions is at least similar to what has motivated moralists to articulate DE. This may be seen through briefly reviewing what Aristotle says there.

(1) He begins by picking out a class of actions which he identifies, it seems, largely by giving examples: cases, he says, such as when a ship is caught in a storm, and the only way to save the ship and its passengers is to jettison the cargo, which no one of sound mind would want to do in other circumstances; or such as when a dictator has arrested your family and threatens to abuse and kill them unless you do something which you regard as disgraceful and despicable. These are akin to cases in which one would naturally wish to bring in DE: in throwing cargo into the sea—which is itself neither immoral nor unlawful—one both saves the ship and incurs a monetary loss; it makes sense to prefer the ship's safety over the money (not least because the loss will be incurred as well if the ship goes down); there is no other way to save the ship; and one takes no pleasure in the loss of the cargo. Again, if in the second case one refused to do the disgraceful thing,[10] then one might wish to defend this by

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[9] See the cases considered in St Augustine's *Letter to Publicola*, which is the main source cited by Aquinas in his discussion.

[10] Often it is supposed that Aristotle is presuming that the agent will act to save his family, and yet the passage gives no grounds for holding this. Actually, there is no need to suppose that Aristotle even meant to suggest a 'right' answer to the dilemma, which serves its purpose if both alternatives appear unpalatable. But suppose the dilemma was formulated in the Academy as an intensification of dilemmas that Socrates faced—its being wondered how Socrates would have acted in these more trying circumstances—then it is natural to think that Aristotle, if, as seems right, he took Socrates as a model of virtuous action, would at least have taken seriously that the

an appeal to DE, claiming that the death of one's family, although foreseen, was not intended, and that the agent cannot be held responsible for the bad actions of others, when these are merely incidental to what he was aiming to do, that is, act always in an upright way: in avoiding the disgraceful action, one both gains an honourable good (the *kalon*) and incurs a loss (of *philoi*);[11] it makes sense to prefer the one over the other;[12] there is no third way out (*ex hypothesi*); and certainly one takes no pleasure in the death of one's spouse and children.

(2) Aristotle then raises the question of whether actions of that sort are *hekousion* or *akousion*. Later we shall consider how these terms are to be understood, and how they might best be rendered. For the moment we can use the common rendering and take Aristotle's question to be whether such actions are voluntary or involuntary. He maintains that they are voluntary, but that they have a 'mixed' character and that they are also in some way, or in some respect, involuntary (1110a11). Thus, someone who in the midst of a storm decides to throw the cargo into the sea is doing something which is voluntary but also, somehow, involuntary—presumably because he voluntarily throws the cargo into the sea to save the ship, but the cargo's loss is not something he voluntarily brings about. It is not necessary to settle here the character of this 'mixture'. We should observe only that one might naturally describe actions justified through DE in a similar way: for example, to kill in self-defence is a 'mixed' action which contains aspects of both the voluntary and the involuntary, since the person who acts in that way voluntarily kills to defend himself but (we are assuming) does not wish to kill the other. That is to say, for cases in which DE is applied, it looks as though what is done has a mixed or double character, which gets signalled by saying that the agent acts 'intentionally' or 'aims directly' at bringing about the good consequence but that the bad consequence is 'unintended' or 'inadvertent'. Again, just as in Aristotle there seems to be the suggestion that legislators can hold agents responsible for their voluntary actions only, or an action insofar as it is voluntary, so when DE is used to analyse an action it is held that agents are not to be held responsible just for the bad consequences of their action, but only for whether the good consequence was properly preferred.

(3) Aristotle's explanation of the way in which some actions are 'mixtures' of the voluntary and involuntary involves his drawing a distinction between an action which is contemplated or carried out 'just on its own', and the same or a

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agent should refuse to do the shameful thing. The two cases actually faced by Socrates were: the Thirty Tyrants commanded him to arrest an innocent man, and he refused; his friends tried to persuade him to escape from prison for the sake of caring for his family, and he refused. These dilemmas are intensified if one imagines that it is not Socrates but those he cares for who will suffer through his refusal to heed the Tyrants' command, or that the cost of his refusing to do something shameful, such as deliberately break the law in escaping from prison, was not merely that his family suffer from his absence, but also that they be tortured and killed.

[11] It would seem that *NE* 9.8 would imply that the dilemma should be construed in this way.

[12] Compare the principle *magis amica veritas*, *NE* 1.6, 1096a16–17.

similar action carried out in particular circumstances which necessitate it. (The former is, or would be, involuntary, the latter voluntary.) But a similar distinction needs to be drawn for cases in which DE is thought to apply. In such cases it looks as though one can distinguish between doing some action in a certain context or for a certain purpose, and doing a similar action just on its own, such that the description of the former involves some qualification, but the description of the latter is unqualified, viz.:

- Killing a man *in self-defence*; killing a man.
- A dose that shortens life *in controlling pain*; a dose that shortens life.

From 'he killed a man in self-defence' it seems that one cannot properly infer 'he killed a man'; at least, it would appear misleading to claim the latter on the basis of the former. This is puzzling because the former case seems to add something to the fact that he killed—he killed, and it was in self-defence—and from a complex predication one would appear to be licensed to affirm either simple predication on its own (from 'he is tall and fat' it follows that 'he is tall'). Again, from 'the doctor administered a drug which controlled pain and shortened the patient's life' one cannot properly infer 'the doctor administered a drug which shortened the patient's life',—at least, one cannot say this without adding a qualification to rule out the natural implicature of the statement, namely, that the doctor administered a drug to shorten the patient's life, or that 'the doctor shortened the patient's life with a drug'. If one thinks of actions as complexes built up out of components, one would be tempted to say that it looks as though what the agent does according to the qualified description ('kills a man in self-defence') does not contain as a component what the agent does according to the unqualified description, even though it seems to contain it ('kills a man'). If 'in self-defence' describes a 'context' or 'circumstance', it seems as though the component is altered essentially by that circumstance—even though from the use of the same form of words it seems the same.

(4) Finally, after drawing a distinction to account for how the actions he is concerned with are 'mixed', Aristotle seems to hold that an agent faced with such an action is praised or blamed depending upon the preference which is revealed in his choice (1111a19–26), and we saw that this was the appropriate way of understanding the condition of proportionality in DE.

Thus, for the reasons given, it seems reasonable to look to Aristotle's account of mixed actions as the place where he discusses phenomena of human action similar to those which other moralists have wished to consider in reference to DE. Now this leads to two questions: first, does Aristotle himself endorse, perhaps implicitly or indirectly, DE or something close to it?; second, if he does, what would be his philosophical motivation?—since evidently he is interested neither in esoteric difficulties arising from the application of technology nor in finding prima facie objections to consequentialism. To answer these questions, it is best to proceed to a careful reading of the relevant passage.

3. Mixed actions and necessitation

I shall discuss *NE* 3.1, 1110a2–b17 in relation to four questions: (1) Does Aristotle pick out satisfactorily the class of actions he is interested in? (2) What does he mean by a 'mixed' action? (3) How does he resolve the difficulty he raises? and (4) What does he mean by a 'necessitated' action?

(1) *Does Aristotle pick out satisfactorily the class of actions he is interested in?* The relevant sentence is in the following passage:

> [1110a1] An action is 'forced' if its cause is from without, viz. the sort of cause for which nothing is contributed by the person acting, or the person being acted upon, for example if wind carries you somewhere, or men who have you in their power. But whatever actions are done on account of fear of greater evils, or on account of [a5] something noble, for example if a tyrant commands you to do something disgraceful, when he has your parents and children in his power, and says that if you do it they will be saved but if you don't do it they will be put to death—there's a difficulty as to whether these actions are *akousion* or *hekousion*. That's the sort of thing that happens also when cargo is jettisoned in a storm: without qualification, no one [a10] throws cargo over gladly, but to save himself and the others, everyone with any sense will do so (emphases mine).

Aristotle picks out the class of actions he is interested in with the phrase 'done on account of fear of greater evils, or on account of something noble', and this looks too broad, insofar as it seems to include any action for which fear is a motive, and any virtuous action whatsoever, which, according to Aristotle, must always be done for the sake of the nobility or honour of it.[13]

But surely 'on account of fear of greater evils' means '*only* on account of fear of greater evils', which implies that there is no other motive in doing the action and, in particular, there is nothing attractive about it (and perhaps even something repugnant); and, if that is the meaning, then by parallelism 'on account of something noble' means 'only on account of something noble', which again implies that there is nothing attractive about it (and perhaps even something repugnant). A definite subclass of virtuous actions is thereby circumscribed: for example, on this reading dying heroically in battle would fall within the intended class (see 1117b8–9), but giving a gift to one's friend, which causes both of you delight, would not.

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[13] See for example 9.8.1169a3–12, and presumably acting for the sake of the nobility or honour of it is included in the second condition of virtuous action stated at 2.4, 1105a32.

There is an interesting parallelism of sentence structure in the above passage, highlighted by underlining. In two successive sentences, Aristotle gives a definition including a disjunction, which is followed by the word 'for example' (Gk: *hoion*), which then introduces two examples.[14] It is not unusual in Aristotle to find him employing a turn of phrase or device that occurs rarely in the corpus as a whole, but which, when it is used once, gets repeated within a relatively short span, as though when he finds something suitable he likes to use it several times, stereotypically, before moving on. If that is the case here, then for help with construing the force of the qualification, 'or on account of something noble', we might turn to the disjunct in the preceding sentence, 'or the person being acted upon'.

It seems possible to identify the force of that qualification. Note that Aristotle states the definition of 'forced' action in two other places in the chapter, and in neither place is the qualification added (b1–3, 15–17). Thus we should naturally interpret 'of the person being acted upon' as something which serves to emphasize or strengthen, but which is not necessary for the definition.[15] Thus, similarly, 'or on account of something noble' would serve to highlight something, and there is a ready explanation of what this might be. In some cases in which someone acts to avoid the greater evil, the evils are of the same type—for instance, someone accepts the amputation of his limb to remove a risk to his life—and yet in the cases that Aristotle seems more interested in, the evil which the agent accepts is pain or suffering, which is conceived of as the only alternative to doing something disgraceful or dishonourable, such as running away in battle. These truly are cases of choosing the lesser of two evils, by Aristotle's lights, since, he thinks, the disgrace would be worse than the physical pain. Yet to signify that the greater evil is different in kind, in the realm of the noble

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[14] The examples are similar also: one involving being under the control of strong men, the other involving being influenced by the wind. Note the cases are reversed in chiasmus—*wind/strongmen//strongman/wind*—precisely, it seems, to invite the reader to make the connection.

[15] This assessment of the weight of the qualification in the sentence cannot be settled, however, without settling what Aristotle is referring to with the phrase. For example, suppose that 'or the person being acted upon' is supposed to refer to spontaneous or reflex phenomena, for instance, someone who jumps when in a quiet room someone else shouts. This would be a matter of someone's being forced in how he *reacts* (it is claimed), not in how he *acts*. If this were the meaning of the phrase, it would actually be introducing additional cases, rather than merely emphasizing something about a class of cases already well enough identified. He would mention these other cases only here, and not in the two subsequent statements of the definition, because these are unusual and secondary cases. However, this interpretation may safely be put aside. The class of cases is so unusual, that they could not easily be suggested by a single word, nor is it reasonable to suppose that Aristotle expected that they could, and the class which is meant on the hypothesis is so interesting, that if Aristotle were to consider it at all, he would likely give it fuller attention. Moreover, it is not clear why for Aristotle the agent would not be *doing* something when he reacts spontaneously and by 'animal instinct', as it were, or if he is not doing something, then why he would not be *contributing* something—especially when a burden of the chapter is to argue that what someone does through 'animal' motives such as *thumos* and *epithumia* are actions which qualify as *hekousion*.

(*kalon*) and disgraceful (*aischron*), it would be useful to say 'or on account of something noble', that is, on account of something of that different sort.[16]

So then, it seems that Aristotle does pick out a definite class of cases here. He is interested in actions that we do even though they are repugnant, which is an interesting class on the supposition that we act through attraction—that, if left alone, we do what we want to do (see b12). If someone 'of his own accord' and on his own does what he wants to do, then, it might be thought, someone does something other than this only when, as in the case of 'forced' actions, something or someone from the outside deflects or constrains his activity. For Aristotle, action explained by appeal to fear, a kind of repulsion, is inherently problematic; action is not satisfactorily explained until one can appeal to something within the agent which is drawn to something achieved or possessed in the action. To the extent that repulsion is responsible for an action, to that extent it is as if the agent is not acting. From these considerations we see, too, that what Aristotle means by *akousion* (usually rendered 'involuntary') is 'against the grain' or 'contrary to what the agent wants to do', and likewise *hekousion* means not so much voluntary as 'done of its own accord' or even, as we would most naturally say in English, 'gladly' or 'happily' done.

(2) *What does he mean by a 'mixed' action?*

Aristotle does not explain what he means in calling these sorts of actions 'mixed' (1110a11).[17] But since his discussion of forced actions seems to follow the lines of his account of forced or violent action in the *Physics* (8.4), and since he is presuming, as in his natural philosophy, that a natural agent moves primarily through attraction to its natural end, then it seems plausible to construe 'mixed' as meaning something like a mixture of forces, of which the action is a result, as for instance water that wants to go down but takes a curvilinear path in following a pipe: its motion is a mixture of its natural inclination and something which constrains and influences it externally.

The mixture he describes as: the action is 'without qualification *akousion*, but *hekousion* for this purpose (or, in exchange for this)', (see, for example, 1110a9–10). Now in this connection there are two important points to be made about the Greek word *haplōs*, the term that is rendered as 'without qualification', (or sometimes 'absolutely' or 'unconditionally'): (i) *haplōs* generally belongs to the formal rather than the material mode of speech; that is, it signals how we should appropriately speak about something. 'Jettisoning cargo is *haplōs*

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[16] The phrase also opens up the possibility that in some cases pain and suffering can result not merely from 'doing what one is bound to do' but also from the opportunity to act heroically, in a supererogatory manner.

[17] In particular, his introduction of the term is not followed by a *gar* clause ('for'), as we might wish for and expect.

akousion' means that it is proper to say, simply, that 'Jettisoning cargo is *akousion*', that is, that no qualifications need to be supplied in order for this statement not to be misleading. (ii) Aristotle tells us what it is which makes this statement proper, namely, that 'Jettisoning the cargo' is not the sort of action that someone would do on its own (*kath'auto*), that this is what we would strongly avoid doing ('for no reason' at all). What underwrites the claim *haplōs* is a truth about our motives with regard to doing the action *kath'auto*.

If we view Aristotle's discussion as a standard *aporia* (the stating of a difficulty by posing what seems to be a contradiction, in giving two sides of a question) followed by a *lysis* (some way of making both sides of the contradiction turn out true, by assigning an appropriate sense to each which makes it possible that both be true), we may find it difficult to see the force in the 'pro-*akousion*' side of the difficulty. But Aristotle surely finds it powerful for both 'logical' and ethical reasons. The logical reason is that typically the unqualified use of a term gives its proper and strict sense, so if jettisoning the cargo is *haplōs akousion*, one would think that the dilemma should be resolved by saying that the captain's jettisoning of the cargo in the storm was (after all) *akousion*.[18] The ethical reason is that evaluation of actions is typically relative to character, yet what one finds appealing or repulsive considered just on its own (*kath'auto*) seems the best indication of character—this reveals to us what the agent will go after, just insofar as things are up to him—so it looks strange to suggest that appeal to the agent's motives as regards the action, insofar as these spring from his character, is somehow to be overridden. Given 'this is the kind of thing that someone with his character finds highly repugnant', it seems odd to maintain 'he is gladly doing something like that—doing it of his own accord'.

Note that *kath'auto* does not mean 'in abstraction', 'considered abstractly', or even 'considered in anticipation, apart from its context', because as later examples show, Aristotle thinks that 'enduring pain' is something which is *kath'auto akousion*, and someone who endures pain rather than do something disgraceful (as a soldier holding his position in battle) is not finding repugnant anything especially abstract (see 1117b8). (We might say that pain is the sort of thing that, because of physical or automatic reaction to it, we cannot but regard as isolated from whatever good follows from our enduring it.) Note also that there is apparently no need to pick just one way in which an agent would show a mixture of motives. We can imagine several: for example, in advance of jettisoning he hesitates and is upset, but when the moment comes he does so gleefully (here the action's being *akousion* is manifested only in anticipation; compare Aristotle's emphasis on changes in motives over time at 1115b29–1116a4); or while jettisoning he grumbles and acts reluctantly (the *akousion* as shown now in the quality of his action). Or perhaps the mixture is established simply by inference from other actions, as for example that in less serious circumstances he never jettisons (whereas there are feckless crew members who sometimes as a prank just throw stuff overboard), without much worry over what should be identified as occurrent psychological signs.[19] Again, neither does 'mixed' mean merely 'from mixed motives', as should be clear; the problem Aristotle is concerned about does not arise unless one can pick out a class of actions which the agent in advance finds repugnant for reasons that have something to do with his nature or second nature (sc. his character).

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[18] Suppose one were to pose the difficulty, 'Is a cardinal a red or a black bird? After all, it has black markings.' The resolution, that the cardinal is red, would follow from its being red *haplōs* but black only in certain respects.

(3) *How does Aristotle resolve the difficulty he raises?*

He resolves the difficulty in favor of mixed actions being *hekousion*: they appear to be mixtures of *akousion* and *hekousion*, but, he says, they are *mallon hekousion* (1110a12). The term *mallon* might mean here either: 'rather'; 'more' in degree; or 'prior', in ranking. One would presume the first alternative, for three reasons: Aristotle's conclusion gets repeated once without that term at all, at a18; none of the reasons he gives for the conclusion involves comparisons of intensity or rank, and so neither can his conclusion without being invalid; and Aristotle is not disposed to qualify his general view about what makes an action *akousion* in light of these cases, yet he would need to do so if there were some sense, at least, in which mixed actions were *akousion*.

There seem to be three distinct reasons for his conclusion:[20]

[1] 1110a12–15. To act involves choosing for a purpose: but a choice takes place at a certain time; and the end governing the action is what we are aiming at, at that time (compare: 'His contract was constituted by his understanding of it in the act of consenting to undertake it'). Thus whether an agent is doing what he wants or not depends upon whether, at the time he acts, he wants to do what he is doing; and clearly in the cases imagined he does.

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[19] Note also there is no need for people or societies to continue to remain conflicted about something that they at one time are conflicted about: it would seem possible that deliberation, and ethical training, could be refined in the manner of a law code, such that the rationale for certain actions otherwise undesirable becomes so clear, that these actions lose their repugnant aspect. For instance, suppose that as someone's seamanship develops he acquires much experience of cases of jettisoning cargo under necessity and marks them out clearly as a different kind of case ('oh, that's not *jettisoning cargo*—which no sensible person would ever want to do—that's a tactic for *lightening ships in a storm*'). This kind of reclassification might not affect feelings after the fact (the man who loses his gangrenous leg through medical amputation will regret its loss just as much as the one who lost a healthy leg in an accident); also, again, it will probably not affect how we experience physical pain ('pain in battle' will not easily become something other than repugnant—although it *can* be, as with athletes who are happy when their muscles feel sore, because that means they will make faster progress in training).

[20] They can be identified as distinct, because each is offered independently of the others. [2] is independent of [1] at b4 (besides, it is introduced with *kai gar*); [1] is independent of both others at b6; and [3] is first introduced as independent, and that it is meant as a reason for the conclusion is shown by b3 and by the repetition (twice) of similar phrases.

[2] a15–19. This seems a reinforcing reason—if it were doubted that he wanted to do the action, then one could reply: he did not refrain from doing it; yet he could have; and (understand) if he did not want to do it, then he would have. His acting when it was up to him not to act shows that he wanted to act. Here we should understand Aristotle's language about how the *archē* is within the agent to be a reference to Aristotle's notion of a living thing as a natural substance, and which therefore has an internal principle of motion and change (*Phys.* 2.1), but which is also a self-mover (*Phys.* 8.4), insofar as it has a soul which makes use of instruments for accomplishing its purposes: the language spells that out, while indicating that the determination of movement or rest hinges on principles within the agent.

[3] a19–29. If the action is going to be counted as *hekousion*, then (it is presumed) we need to make it intelligible that the agent would be inclined to do it (since, as we have seen, *hekousion* means that the agent is seeking it of his own accord); but, whereas the undesirable action on its own would not intelligibly be sought by this agent, nonetheless the content of the choice may be given in terms of an ordering or preference, 'this instead of that'. That the content can be given in this way explains the grounds on which agents are praised or blamed for their actions: in circumstances not involving necessitation (it is presumed) they are praised if their choice and goal are good and blamed otherwise; but here in contrast they are praised or blamed for (one might say) the 'relative good' attained in their action, not whether they are seeking something good absolutely, but something good relative to the alternative. Note that Aristotle is supposing that nothing can be praised or blamed unless it is *hekousion*; thus, the possibility and intelligibility of praise and blame for these sorts of actions confirms that they are *hekousion*.

(4) *What does Aristotle mean by a necessitated action?*

A necessitated action seems to be simply a mixed action, although it gets the label 'necessitated' with a view to how the action would be justified or defended, since if in a mixed action we do what we would otherwise would not want to do, and which we would get blamed for seeking and doing if we proposed to act that way, or did so act, gratuitously or 'just on its own', then a certain burden of argument falls on the agent, when he seems to do that sort of action, to show why if he had acted otherwise he would have done something worse, that is, that he 'had' to act that way or was 'bound' or 'necessitated' to do so. That this is what Aristotle means by the term is clear from the cases he gives at a19–29, where the term is introduced. As regards these cases, it looks as though there are three: a case of evident praiseworthiness (a19–23); a case of evident blameworthiness (a23–4); and a case where, although the reckoning was correct, the person could not endure the bad thing he resolved to endure (a24–6). Perhaps the last case is chosen as the extreme form which calls attention to two dimensions of evaluation mentioned by Aristotle: whether the reckoning was correct, and whether the correct reckoning was carried out (see a32).

If so, then the remark about 'not being possible to be necessitated' (a27) makes a point distinct from this triad and is not, as is sometimes thought, a continuation of the third case. That is, 'not possible to be necessitated' means that the action cannot plausibly be defended by an appeal to that sort of account. The claim is not the psychological one, that there are some actions one cannot be compelled to do, no matter what torture is applied (obviously not, because Aristotle gives an example of just such an action, which someone did when under far less pressure than from torture), but rather that any kind of action, which is such that nothing is conceivably worse (he has in mind, 'more disgraceful'), could not be justified as necessitated, because it could never be the lesser of evils. An action such as matricide, which would obviously and for everyone be an extreme evil of that sort, could never be justified on grounds of necessitation, and thus never 'necessitated' in the relevant sense.

Perhaps another aspect of the ridiculousness of the claim that one 'had' to kill one's mother derives not from its evident falseness but also from a kind of practical contradiction in the claim, in the sense that one thinks that if one found killing one's mother repugnant at all, then one would find it so completely repugnant as never to regard oneself necessitated to do it; thus someone who claims necessitation is ridiculous as claiming that he appreciates the action's repugnance while acting in a way which suggests no appreciation.

This is the spirit in which Aristotle's 'people are praised or blamed as regards whether they are necessitated or not' (a33–b1), that is, people vary in how well they appreciate the badness of acting dishonourably, and the measure of this is their repugnance at acting that way, as shown in how severe the sufferings and pains they are willing to endure to avoid it are. What the courageous person is praised for is his doing what, through his sense of honour, he regards himself as necessitated to do.[21] The coward is not necessitated at all in what he does, because he is not doing anything he regards as repugnant.[22]

4. Some conclusions

The relationship between the two cases. The class of actions which Aristotle would describe as 'necessitated' is evidently the very same class to which a DE analysis would apply. Both involve acting so as to bring about (or not acting to prevent) something bad, in circumstances of constraint such that this could not be done except by being responsible for something taken to be worse. Suppose there are two goods such that each is reasonably wanted but one is correctly preferred to the other, and suppose that circumstances are such that the goods have become so bound together that the only action which suffices to preserve the one is something which destroys the other; then we may say either that in the circumstances the agent is necessitated, by fear of losing the greater good, to act so as to destroy what he usually would want to preserve, or that in the circumstances the only action by which the agent may, as usual, preserve the greater good happens also to destroy the lesser good.

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[21] By far the most common statement made about their own actions by soldiers awarded the US Congressional Medal of Honor, ostensibly for 'gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty' is that they 'had no choice' but to do what they did (see <http:www.cmohs.org>, the website of the Congressional Medal of Honor Society, for accounts and testimonies).

[22] If a coward claimed to soldiers who had withstood the hardships of the battle that 'I simply had to flee; I could not do otherwise, although I found that deeply repugnant', he would be ridiculed as much as Euripides' Alcmaeon.

An upshot is that DE applies to a much broader range of actions than is typically thought. As we have seen, Aristotle evidently wishes to regard suffering pain and death in battle as necessitated, and the moral character of the act depends upon the nature of the necessitation: whether the evil regarded as worse than death is the dishonour of cowardly action; the poor opinion of one's peers; or the certain as opposed to probable loss of life, when one fights only because a commander has given orders to kill anyone who retreats.[23] Similarly, DE applies to these actions, although it would not be so applied, because it is thought obvious that such actions are justifiable. Even so, a soldier might be asked, 'Suicide is forbidden, so why do you act in battle so as to die?' To which it might be replied that what is intended is the carrying out of the (lawful and honourable) command; one's own death is incidental to that intention; it is a lesser evil; and there is no alternative.[24]

Plato apparently had already seen the need to think about human action in such a way as to demarcate clearly heroism from suicide. Crito argues that Socrates will be harming his children if he does not escape, and Socrates' reply in effect is that he is not responsible for that, because he is intending to be lawful. Again, the *Phaedo* testifies to Plato's implicit acceptance of the fourth condition of DE, because parts of the dialogue are motivated by Plato's recognition that the difference between suicide and Socrates' behaviour is harder to explain if one holds that Socrates earnestly desires his own death. Plato's reply to this problem, in line with DE, is to make Socrates' desire for his death once sentenced incidental to a planned and purposive seeking of death through the practice of philosophy during his life—the philosopher conceives of the desire for death as a way of life, with respect to which his actual death, when it arrives, is something merely incidental.[25]

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[23] See the discussion of the five types of false courage in 3.7.

[24] Aristotle, too, is prepared to explain death in battle as incidental to courageous action: see 1094b18.

[25] See Pakaluk (2003).

Needless to say, another upshot is that DE is not some sectarian principle of reasoning, specifically 'Thomist' or 'Catholic', or something that has plausibility primarily within a narrow casuistic tradition, because it represents an attempt to make explicit—for the purposes of guiding deliberation about difficult cases—principles that we all automatically rely upon when we would say that we 'have to' do something that we 'don't want to do'. These cases are different from doing what we straightforwardly want to do, and DE gives simply a framework for evaluating praiseworthiness or blameworthiness in those non-standard cases.[26]

On the difference in approach between DE and Aristotle's discussion. Aristotle's first presumption is that agents are good and do what they want; therefore it needs to be explained how they do things that bring about something bad. This is because in ethics he tends to suppose he is dealing with a virtuous person, since he thinks 'a good person is the standard' for fixing the meaning of terms used in ethics,[27] and it is a deep methodological presumption for him that one talks most accurately about ethics by referring principally to the central cases. He therefore conceives of mixed actions as a deflection from what a virtuous agent was wanting to do—although not a deflection toward doing bad, since he still does what is best in the circumstances. Proponents of DE, by contrast, typically presume that an agent is liable to act badly and therefore are typically concerned with identifying what someone should do (when he might not succeed in doing that). Hence DE functions more as a framework for deliberation and justification rather than a type of explanation. At the same time it is presupposed that in principle an agent ought to be able to act perfectly innocently and blamelessly; therefore they conceive of a situation in which DE applies as one in which we are pursuing something that is unconditionally good, and the repugnant thing we must do or endure is understood as something which is, in a sense, irrelevant to what we are doing, and therefore it can be dismissed and plays no role in changing the good character of the good thing the agent is pursuing.[28] Compare the following cases. Case 1: you are driving a school bus; a squirrel runs in front of the bus before you have chance to react; and you run it over but cannot blame yourself (because you could not have done otherwise). Case 2: you are driving the bus; a squirrel runs in front of the bus; you could react, but at the cost of possibly causing injury to your passengers; so you run it over. In the latter case as much as the former you write off the squirrel's death: in the former it cannot affect your actions; in the latter you should not let it. Or, again, you take prudent measures to defend yourself, such as putting up walls around your house and carrying a sword, which you are trained to use, and you are not swayed from your course of keeping yourself alive because someone tries to take your life: that someone makes this attempt is irrelevant; it changes nothing.

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[26] It should be clear that the interpretation proposed here is entirely different in spirit from that offered by Hughes (2004), which draws an invidious comparison between Aristotelian practical wisdom, which he favors, and casuistry using DE, which he disdains.

[27] See 1113a32–3, 1166a12–13, 1170a15–16, a21, 1176b24–6, 1176a16–19.

[28] Clearly both of these presumptions—which change how the class of necessitated actions is viewed and approached, and do not touch upon the substance—derive from specifically Christian doctrines, viz. the doctrine of the Fall, according to which acting rightly is inevitably problematic, and the doctrine of Providence, according to which it is always possible to preserve innocence in action.

The appearance of a difference in the scope of mixed action in contrast with DE arises from the fact that Aristotle's discussion takes place in a context in which he is developing the thought that moral virtue involves the shaping of *epithumia* and *thumos* so that they habitually aim at what upon consideration one would regard as good. In his consideration of mixed actions, then, he is as much concerned with what is repugnant to *thumos* (because feared) and *epithumia* (because painful) as with what is repugnant to *boulēsis* (because shameful). Hence he also rejects the views that a person simply is his mind (and thus not responsible for how his *thumos* and *epithumia* respond[29]), or that what we would not want in ideal circumstances is not what we do not in any sense want, or that we are responsible only for what we deliberately choose. In contrast, DE was originally articulated in the context of a discussion of the virtue of particular justice, where considerations of how an emotion, or a faculty of desire, is rationally shaped play little or no role; and it continues to get invoked in casuistical contexts, which appeal only to deliberation and choice.

Significance of the appeal to 'inherently wrong' actions. It is sometimes thought that DE depends in some special way upon a notion of 'inherently wrong' actions which is, moreover, so strong ('wrong whatever the consequences') that it could not be endorsed by a 'secularist' outside of a religious context[30]—because the applicability of DE, it is supposed, requires that one first identify something that the agent is doing which is not 'inherently wrong'. But it would be better to say that, for those who hold that some actions are 'inherently wrong' and never to be done whatever the consequences, then, clearly, *those* could not be the sorts of actions that could get justified by some kind of DE reasoning. But in just the same way, the class of potentially necessitated actions would be limited to those that were not 'inherently wrong'. As we have seen, Aristotle accepts that there is such a limitation—actions which it would be absurd to justify as necessitated—and the difference between him and those who have favoured DE would seem to consist solely in how broad this class of actions is.

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[29] See the discussion later in 3.1, at 1111a24–b3. For a complementary account, which casts a similar point by contending that in his account of mixed actions Aristotle is broadening his notion of 'force', see Flannery (2007).

[30] So McIntyre refers indifferently to a 'non-absolutist' and 'secular' version of DE (2001: 220, 223 n8). And yet there is nothing particularly 'non-secular' about adherence to moral absolutes: see Denyer (1997), who refers to Plato, *Rep.* 442d–443a and Horace, *Odes* 3.3.1–8, among other authorities, to make the point.

For someone who conceived of morality as largely a matter of lawfulness, that is, as identifying the rightful authority in some domain of action (the father in the household, the employer at work, the legislator in the city, etc.), and correctly discerning the scope of that authority (e.g. when the authority of the father may, and may not, be overridden by the authority of the employer), then an 'inherently wrong' action would be the sort of thing ruled out by the highest authority, whether the authority was divine or human. Thus we see in one context suicide ruled out by Socrates on the grounds that the gods would forbid it; and in another context escape from prison is ruled out on the grounds that the laws forbid it. Aristotle shows sympathy, at least, with conceiving of morality in this way, since he thinks that justice 'in general' is equivalent to lawfulness, and he thinks that practical wisdom when applied to the deliberations involving associations of persons is equivalent to virtue in legislating and governing (1129b11–24, 1141b23–5). This is just to say that necessitation and DE alike presuppose some framework of lawful action and should not be interpreted as capable of supplying or justifying such a framework.

Bundling. In both necessitation and DE, the two relevant goods must be bundled together by circumstances in such a way that the only action which saves the one implies the loss of the other—that is, it is impossible to preserve both—and this is what enables the agent to claim that what he is choosing is not the loss of the one (full stop) but rather the gain of the one 'at the price of' the loss of the other. Now it may be wondered whether only physical circumstances can bundle goods in this way (a storm and laws of buoyancy; a fixed track with a switching mechanism) or whether someone's choice, command, or threat may also bundle. Some cases of the latter we clearly do not count as creating a bundling. Augustine gives an example[31] of a man who threatens a woman that he will hang himself if she does not sleep with him: Augustine deals with this by allowing that the man's threat really does make his life and her chastity goods that she cannot simultaneously preserve, but he holds that she clearly should prefer the latter to the former. However, one might just as well say that, unless the man is deranged, his threat implies no necessity, since after she refuses he might still just walk away. On the other hand a sovereign's decree would seem indeed to bundle—which is why we think that Socrates, even though he took the hemlock and drank it, was necessitated to accept his own death and did not commit suicide. In this connection it is valuable to remember that when someone claims necessitation he is not thereby excused; rather, the claim is an invitation to examine whether the goods really were bundled, and whether he really did prefer the greater good: thus, the soldier who defends his action by saying he 'had no choice' because he was under orders may still be faulted on either of these two grounds.

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[31] *On Lying*, 9.

The two standard objections to DE. It is useful to examine two standard objections to DE, to see whether they hold when the choice is described as necessitation, since, if not, then the objections are spurious.

Perhaps the most common objection to DE is that it conceals the true character of the agent's action, because there is nothing indirect or not intended about the agent's acting in such a way as to destroy the lesser good. Take killing in self-defence as the clearest example: if the aggressor is so big and powerful that only stopping his heart will stop him, and someone skilled in the use of a gun, realizing this, takes aim and shoots him in his heart, there seems to be nothing indirect or incidental about this killing at all. The action itself seems indistinguishable from someone who shoots to kill someone he hates. So DE may be faulted for trying to make it seem as if the agent is innocently and blamelessly doing nothing bad at all, whereas he is in fact deliberately doing something bad, and intellectual honesty requires that he reckon with that.

The second objection arises from the first, namely, that DE conceals the consequentialist reasoning that really explains the nature of the choice. If killing in self-defence is (or may be) deliberate killing, then what makes it permissible is simply that we regard the good which this preserves as weighty enough so as to justify the killing. The correct way of describing what is going on, then, is not that there is some class of actions ('direct' or 'deliberate' killing) which is always wrong, but rather that in ordinary circumstances killing someone does not lead to weighty enough benefits to justify it, yet there are extraordinary circumstances in which it does.

The first objection, as we have seen, is weak even when directed at a DE type justification: to say that something bad is brought about 'apart from one's intention', is not to say something about the psychological state of the agent, but rather that we can identify some good that the agent is seeking to preserve and typically does so seek, which is so valuable that he should not refrain from doing so when his continued seeking of it implies the loss of some good which is to be preferred less. But the point is even clearer when we account for his action with a necessitation-type justification, since then nothing needs to be said about the agent's psychological state in sacrificing the lesser good, except that he finds doing so repugnant: the cargo is deliberately and (in any ordinary sense) intentionally thrown into the sea.

So the comparison of necessitation and DE allows us to say that the first objection is in a sense correct, yet in such a way that it loses its force. What makes it licit that the agent act so as to sacrifice the lesser good is not something about his psychological state in aiming at it or not, but rather the availability of another good, to be preferred over the one he sacrifices, and the availability, too, of some regular means of preserving it, such that he can say that he sacrifices the lesser good in taking the regular means of preserving the greater good. A proponent of DE might then say that there is a greater good to which his will can advert that makes it possible for his action in sacrificing the lesser to be 'incidental', but this is a remark about the structure of the justification of his action, not his individual psychology (although his 'psychology,' as we have seen, may be relevant to condition 4 of DE).

In reply to the second objection, it would seem that one should say that in both necessitation and DE goods are weighed, but only in the sense that one is judged to be rightly preferred to another, where 'rightly preferred' means merely something like 'it makes sense, and would be praiseworthy, to prefer it', not that any rational agent must prefer it.[32] Moreover, the weighing and preference are conceived of as internal to the action: the action itself displays a preference for the one good, since both goods cannot be preserved in that action.[33] That is why the action, although it sacrifices a good, is itself good through and through: what is properly evaluated in ethics are motives and actions, and both the action (displaying a preference) and the motives (mixed, and displaying a proper repugnance) are good. What we have called 'bundling' is what makes it possible for the weighing of goods to be displayed in a single action. When there is no bundling and no necessitation, then there are two actions; that is to say, we first complete doing something bad, and the will 'rests in this', and then the other is realized, in which case the former is blameworthy both as an action and with respect to its motive.

There may be two final doubts, which may be referred to as that of the 'Pacifist' and that of the 'Consequentialist'. The Pacifist may worry that if one holds that killing in self-defence is permissible, then one encourages killing in other circumstances, since *some* killing has been allowed: wouldn't it be at least safer, then, to stay away from all killing, by ruling it out *tout court*? To this it may be replied that we always need to distinguish between actions which are alike from those that merely seem alike (to distinguish, for example, surgery from mutilation); and that DE presupposes discernment and understanding in ethical reasoning and cannot be taken to replace it. It may be wondered, too, whether practically speaking pacificism is indeed 'safer', since it is arguably not possible for people to persevere as pacificists, and if when they reject pacificism they have no means of distinguishing legitimate from illegitimate use of force, they will inevitably lapse into barbarism.[34]

The Consequentialist, finally, may wonder why, if it is agreed to be licit and even reasonable to weigh and balance goods 'within the scope of a single action', then why not also 'outside' the action as well; and if this is allowed at all, would not some form of consequentialism be the most reasonable way of accomplishing it? To this a proponent of DE might reply that consequences of actions can and should be taken into account, but through deliberation and law, and not in such a way as to permit individual actions to be corrupted—which should be good through and through if they are to serve as sound components in a life or in social activity, just as the individual sentences in a speech or discussion need to be true.[35]

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[32] Obviously it does not imply that there is a metric underlying the preference on the basis of which all goods might be commensurate (see Pakaluk 1992).

[33] That is why Aristotle uses throughout his discussion of necessitated actions the idiom of market exchanges ('X in exchange for (*anti*) Y', not 'X for the sake of [*heneka*] Y').

[34] See Anscombe (1981c) for a development of this last point.

[35] Many thanks to Richard Bett, Pierre Destrée, Kevin Flannery, Matthew O'Brien, and Giles Pearson for comments on earlier drafts of this chapter.

10

Acquiring Character: Becoming Grown-Up[1]

Gavin Lawrence

> But it is difficult to get correct guidance (*agogē*) right from one's youth with a view to excellence <of character> if one has not been brought up under such *laws*. For living temperately and hardily is not pleasant to the many, and especially not to the young. That is why it is necessary for upbringing [*trophē*] and duties/practices [*epitedeumata*] to be organized by *laws*: for these will not be painful to them when they become accustomed to them [*sunethē*] . . .
>
> (*NE* 10.9, 1179b31–80a1)

1. Background. Practical philosophy: Praxis, rational choice, full human character *(ethos)*, the norm of character, and dimensions of agency—attraction and value

The *Nicomachean Ethics* is a work of '*practical* philosophy'. Its concern is *Praxis, action,* but action in a sense somewhat obscure to the ear of modern philosophy. It is action in a narrower sense than the merely voluntary, or intentional, action of which animals and children are also capable (*ta hekousia*). Its concern is action whose *archē* is *prohairesis,* action that comes from, or expresses, the human agent's *preferential choice* (3.2, 1111b6–8).[2] Such action expresses the agent's values—in the sense that it is viewed *as* being what is unqualifiedly *best or wisest* to do, as being the appropriate (*prepon*) or fine (*kalon*) way to go on, as being what he *should* do (*dei*), where this is the unqualified (*haplōs*), or 'unsubscripted', 'should' of full practical reason (see Lawrence 1995, 2004). Such action is in a sense fully rational action. For Aristotle, practical reason, or deliberation, has as its formal end *eupraxia*—successful action, in *this* sense of *Praxis*: it is reasoning aimed at determining what we *should* do, should unqualifiedly, in order to do it.

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[2] *Meta.* 6.1.1025b23–4. See *NE* 6.2, 1139a18–20, 31–3; *EE* 2.6, 1222b18–20; 2.8, 1224a27–30; 2.10, 1226b21–3; and for example 1094a1–2; 1095a14–15 1097a21; 3.1–3. See McDowell (1980: sections 1–6); also Lawrence (2004).

Three quick points by way of expansion. (i) *Deliberating to merely intentional action* First, the clever akratic seducer, with much thought, and advice from even cleverer friends and arch-seducers—and doubtless 'Seducing for Dummies' as bedtime reading—plots and contrives the seduction he desires: yet he, for all this reasoning, exploring, reflecting, and rational interaction is nevertheless *not* deliberating, *not* practically reasoning, *in this unqualified sense*[3]: for he is not reasoning to an evaluation of what he *should* do, unqualifiedly (*haplōs*)—to what I call a proper Practical Evaluation[4]: *that* is not his question or aim. Being akratic, he knows or accepts he is going to do what he himself takes it he should not do. His deliberating is not over the question of what he should do: he already knows that and he isn't going to act on it. His problem is working out how to attain something he knows and accepts he shouldn't be after (this problem too could be specificatory or instrumental). So in acting for his akratic project, he will act intentionally, but not from 'choice': so his is not a Praxis. He is not acting for something whose value he believes in, something with which he identifies, seeing in it the realization of his real or true self. It is rather a form of alienation ('I am not really like that'; 'this isn't the real me'): the distance is between a merely intentional agent with their likes and dislikes, attractions and repulsions, and the valuing agent. (ii) *Non-Dimensionality and Maximum Vulnerability* Second, in reasoning to determine what is *unqualifiedly* best or wisest for us to do, our Practical Evaluations, we, as adult humans, are reasoning 'with a view to living well *quite generally*': that is, lives that are successful unqualifiedly, and not merely in one particular aspect or dimension. Our concern is not to determine what is best or wisest for example medically, or financially, or aesthetically, gymnastically, militarily, academically, professionally, and so forth (6.5, 1140a25–31; 6.7, 1141b9–14).[5] The truth of our Practical Evaluation is vulnerable across any and every relevant aspect—not only the dimensions of area or type of human good, but open to diachronic as well as synchronic considerations: and not only from within one's own life, as in saving for retirement, but equally factors about one's contribution to transgenerational concerns, projects, and traditions. All these can bear on what it is good or wise for us to do now. Our Practical Evaluations are thus *maximally vulnerable* in their truth assessment, open to any and all considerations of *any human good and bad.* So our Practical Evaluations are a matter of what we, reasoning in the light of our general and particular views of human goods and bads, conclude to be what counts, in our situation, as human success (*eudaimonia*), or acting or living successfully as a human being (*eupraxia*; *euzoia*): for example 1.4, 1095a14–20; 1.7, 1097a25–b23; 6.2, 1139b3–4; 6.5, 1140b7.[6] (iii) *Double Assessability* And, thirdly, for Aristotle, such Practical Evaluations are *at least* doubly assessable in the sense that 'So I should ϕ' may be false because either the end pursued is incorrect or the means to it. For *ϕ-ing* may be an end, or for an end, that is not good, or not good for the agent to be pursuing, or not in these circumstances: the agent may have ends that he should not, or not have ends he should—or not value them comparatively as he should. Alternatively ϕ-ing may be means to some end that is correctly pursued, but not be the correct means—whether because inadequate or inefficient, or because counter to other ends the agent has or ought to have.

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[3] He may well be '*deinos*': see 6.9.1142b18–20 (reading '*ei deinos*' with Ross); 7.6.1149b13–20. We might say he is using his reasoning powers for other than their proper purpose. For further complexity see Lawrence (2004) (for example if the akratic's deliberation as to the means of seduction reflects concerns from other valued ends he has, such as minimizing distress to others, then his akratic action will partially reflect something of his values, and be shaped by certain judgements of what he should not do, means he should not take).

[4] Compare the notion of 'unconditional best judgement' in Davidson (1980: 21–42).

[5] What range of aspects or perspectives? Note especially that (a) 'ethically' or 'morally' or 'prudentially' are not dimensions; (b) there is no moral/prudential distinction here. All the aspects, I take it, are matters of some particular human good in life (or avoidance of a bad)—many of which are the subjects of *technai* (skills/arts). Are they all—or at least does each mark a place for a skill? Again, some skills may not leave room for deliberation per se

Praxis is then action that agents stand four-square behind, seeing it as truly *theirs*—as expressing their selves, their values, and character—*as* being the *fine* way to go on, as making a life worth the living. For Aristotle, it is *this* that is specifically *human* activity—the *humaning* that is the realization of their essence—the *form of life* and *life-activity* that constitutes the *function* of the human in the adult, or mature, perfection of its nature (*tetelesmenon*) (1.7, 1098a3–5). We are essentially Act-ors, or Prakt-ors—*chosen action* is the specific, or distinctive, human mode of being alive ('each thing is defined by its end', 1115b22): and our ultimate end is success at Praxis (i.e. *eupraxia*). Unsurprisingly then Aristotle denies that mere beasts, and children, choose or act in this sense (for example 1111b8–9; 1139a19–20, 1100a1–3; see *EE* 2.8, 1224a23–30). And for

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(see 3.3.1112a34–b9), but nonetheless there is a rational account and judgements employing a technical 'should'. (Aristotle has a fairly clear-cut nested view of the relation of *technē* and *praxis* [for example *NE* 6.2, 1139b1–4]: this seems basically correct, but the interface of tensions between the demands of a profession and of a human are more intricate—for the borders and tensions of professionality are not so clear as the 'manual' of the 'pure' skill might suggest. 'As a doctor, you go into this work thinking it all a matter of canny diagnosis, technical prowess, and some ability to empathize with people. But it is not, you soon find out. In medicine, as in any profession, we must grapple with systems, resources, circumstances, people—and our own shortcomings, as well. Yet somehow we must advance, we must refine, we must improve.' [Gawande 2007: 8, and see further his three core requirements for success in medicine, 8–9].)

[6] For ambiguities in this, see for instance Lawrence (1993: *passim*; 2005: Part 1, Sec 1–3, 127–44; 2006: 47–9).

humans if they act merely intentionally where they should be Acting/Prakting, they would be exhibiting what is a *defective* form of human acting in an adult. (Naturally there are questions here about, say, innocent actions, like casually making oneself a cup of tea while writing a paper.)

Now, aligned with these two senses of action, Aristotle distinguishes *two* senses or forms of *character* (*eidē tou ethikou*: 6.13, 1144b14–16).[7] First there are patterns and dispositions that animals, children, and even human adults, may all exhibit in their emotions and behaviour. That is, even in living under the sway of the emotion, or the attraction, of the moment (*kata pathos*), as against chosen, or valued, living (*kata prohairesin*), there may be certain natural, or acquired, dispositions and patterns, at the level both of species and of individual. Here we can talk of *natural* (*phusikē*)—or indeed of *habituated* (*ethistē*)—excellence and defect (*aretē, kakia*, virtue, and vice). But in our talk of human character *strictly speaking* (*kuria*) a different sense is at issue (see 1.13, 1102a13ff.; 6.13, 1144b1–17). In *this* talk, a character trait, an excellence, or defect, says something about the possessor's disposition as regards *Praxis* and *Emotion*,[8] that is, as regards both action and reaction that the agent takes to express their values and themselves, to be what they *should* do and *should* feel—to be the appropriate response to the situation. It is a disposition of will, of values, of *preferential choice*, a *hexis prohairetikē* (2.5, 1106a3–4, b36; *EE* 2.5, 1222a31; 2.10, 1227b2–3, 5–9; see 3.7, 1234a23–5; see *NE* 5.5, 1134a1–2; 1111b5–6): that is, a disposition to behave—act and react—in a way directed and illuminated by the agent's reasoning about what it is to behave well or successfully in their situation—about what about response is appropriate or merited (*EE* 2.10, 1227b5ff.; see *NE* 2.6, 1106b5–8; b27–8; b36–07a2; 2.9, 1109a22–3, 6.1. 1138b18–25). It is thus revealing of what they take to be good and bad, fine and base (see 3.2, 1111b5–6; *Poet.* 1450b8–10).

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[7] Action that is *merely* intentional, i.e. non-chosen, aligns with natural character, and chosen action with full character. Aristotle's notion of voluntary or intentional action (*to hekousion*) is broad, inclusive of both the merely intentional, i.e. not chosen, and the chosen (3.2.1111b6–10).

[8] I have not found a place where Aristotle explicitly introduces a notion of prohairetic *pathos*, emotion or reaction, in a way that parallels his introduction of prohairetic *praxis* (see note 2 above)—a sense of '*pathos*' in which animals and children do not have them. Assuredly he sometimes uses *praxis* in a sufficiently broad manner as not to contrast with, but to include, *pathos*. His difficulty is exacerbated by his use of the *kata pathos*/ *kata prohairesin* distinction to contrast merely intentional with proper human action, which creates a prima facie awkwardness in talking of a *pathos* in a narrower sense of chosen emotion. Nonetheless, he explicitly says *pathos*, like *praxis*, is an object of choice (for example 2.6, 1106b16–27; 2.9. 1009a22–3; see 3.7, 1115b19–20). See further Kosman (1980: esp. 113–15) and Lawrence (2009).

There are further questions about (a) whether Aristotle assimilates the distinction between merely intentional action and full *praxis* to the *kata pathos*/*kata prohairesin* distinction, and (b) if so, whether this is correct. In particular, the question arises whether all merely intentional action is *kata pathos*. Thus there is much routine action—at least on the part of animals and children—that seems intentional yet without any felt emotion or desire: for example a cow's grazing, a child absorbed in making a daisy chain (where 'I just felt like it' doesn't report any feeling in *that* sense); or in sudden, emergency, action, where leaping out of the way of a swerving vehicle, one finds oneself on the pavement—and is tempted to say that the fear only came afterwards. Obviously this raises the issue of what '*pathos*' is being used to cover—whether and in what ways, it is wider than what we usually regard as 'emotion'.

Character in this sense is then primarily a settled disposition *to* choose, a disposition *of* the will; yet the relation to value and the will may also be less direct. Thus by 'childishness', 'immaturity', or 'wildness' in a human adult—or indeed by 'weak-will' or 'impulsiveness'—we generally have in mind a character defect that has indeed to do with the will, or choice, but which is a disposition *in relation to* the will, not *of* it (unlike for example *akolasia*). For the point in such characterizations is that the behaviour at issue *lacks* that contact with, or expression of, values and choice that is to be expected in a human by a certain age—it is a lack of character in the primary sense for humans, a failure to *grow up*, or else to act as a grown-up. Character in this sense is not something innate but something we *develop* as we live and widen our social settings and practices, themselves naturally progressing in sophistication and in the challenges of induction and acculturation that they pose; something we develop as we grow from merely liking and disliking things to valuing them *as* good and bad, *as* fine and base. For us to grow up is for us to shift from living *kata pathos* to living *kata prohairesin*: from living by natural prompt to living by rational design, from merely behaving—responding, acting, and reacting—in certain ways to taking it that we *should* so behave, that that is the fine or appropriate, or called for, way to go on. And, in so shifting, we therein take control of our lives—make living into living a life, that is, start to see and evaluate things in the widening context of a life to be achieved, constructed, arranged, and shaped, where seeing that we may do one thing *in order to* achieve another, we start to realize the potential implicit in such ordering in respect of our lives (see *NE* 1.1). This is a transition (i) from attraction to evaluation, from acting and reacting *simply* 'as we like', with, or out of, pleasure and pain, to acting as we think fit, fine, and valuable; (ii) a transition from the rough and ready responses of nature and basic habituated practice to the more finely attuned, more situationally contoured, imaginative and creative, responses of reason-imbued sensitivities; (iii) a transition from a life whose shape is *natural*, ordered, and guided by the promptings of nature and which is, as such, in a sense external to the agent, in not being an object of their devising or appreciation, and which—at least when successful—has a kind of 'external' beauty, appreciated not by the individual agent but by the onlookers, the theorists, of nature (see *PA* 1.5, esp. 645a1–37)—to a life whose shape is *rational*, that is, ordered, guided, and appreciated by the individual's reason: such a life is constructed around the individual's own sense, or view, of order, of beauty or the fine (*to kalon*), of the situationally appropriate, and, if successfully constructed—if what is viewed *as* good to do *is* good to do, and is done—it will indeed have that beauty, that radiant fineness, the agent takes it to have, the beauty of Human Life, a wonderful life.[9] As such it would be a life whose arc, the arc of chosen feeling and action, is described by the proper exercise of the human excellences, and is so taken by the agent. This may be an unqualifiedly perfect, or successful, human life. Yet sometimes to preserve the shape of one's life, its integrity and beauty, requires one to leave, or lose, it. Thus the exercise of courage may demand the loss of one's life to preserve its arc, to retain its proper shape. Such a life is still successful, but only *qualifiedly* so—in the sense that it would be misleading, indeed false, to proffer it as an example of a perfect human life *sans phrase* (see Lawrence, 2005: 128–9): there is a proper regret *that* such circumstances arose which required such a sacrifice, that the agent's life was not ideal in that sense, although ideal and perfect in the sense that no better could have been lived in those conditions, and the agent has no regret, albeit perhaps sadness, *in* doing what they saw they had to do.[10] Its beauty, its fineness, still shines through its shadowed circumstance (*dialampei* 1100b30–1; see b22–1101a8; note 2), and, as with chiaroscuro, more strikingly so than with the untroubled beauty of the unqualifiedly perfect life—its greater glory a function of the very darkness of the hour (10.7, 1177b16–17). One thinks, as ever, of the Spartans at Thermopylae.[11]

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[9] Obviously only beasts have such naturally shaped lives *in toto*, while humans, as Aristotle supposes, transition from a position of natural shaping to rational shaping, via accustomization. A good question to keep in mind is this: does habituation just enable or facilitate the entry of reason, or does it enrich the starting points, the material, that reason has to work on (see *NE* 1.7)—the bringing out of us, the creating of us, as social beings, like the acquisition of language?

[10] Life may be severely marred, for example, by illness, handicaps, family tragedies, and it seems clear that it is not reasonable to expect oneself or another to live successfully, *even qualifiedly*, under certain conditions. One thinks for example of concentration camps, where the framework of ordinary values and human responses is removed: what should a daffodil planted in the Arctic do? There is not success, nor failure, so far outside the situational environment of its being (also part of its essence: essence is not intrinsic that way—not 'isolationist'). Some unusual person might make a kind success—remain obstinately human, a tattered banner, among the many fallen, a reminder of better days ... still unbelievably *true to themselves* and the standards of a former existence, but now actually lacking or on the verge of lacking an environment in which even that make sense—what could it mean really to be 'true to yourself' *here*! Perhaps as a symbol of hope, of the possibility of a better life for humans (although I understand that thrust of thought that—mistakenly—thinks we can stretch such predicates even 'to the Arctic'! But can we? When the flag is not flying any longer for anyone, the symbol no longer potent—but has become a mere husk even for the agent, the flag bearer, a mere ritual whose form of life has passed away for its operants, a motion he still goes through—he still will not ϕ—takes another's bread—although the rationale, the place of this behaviour, has gone: it functions alone or as an echo of a past scenario, the ghost of a form of life, where for example property or respect meant something: it is the mere shell that sustains or constitutes his 'form' of life—the life has gone: like directing sounds into space which one takes to be words, but no one listening would or could understand them—the illusion of a language and communication). The issues are complex (see for example Shalamov 1995): of course this is not to say that one cannot retain, or find, integrity under ultimate conditions; and suicide can be part of a qualifiedly successful life, and even of a perfect one—taking oneself out of a great life at a great moment could be a great thing to do—as also of course of an imperfect one: see 3.1. 1110a26–9.

This notion of full human character functions as a norm, a measure, of human beings and their success: it constitutes the model of the kind of person the Adult or Mature Human is, of what it is to be *a Grown-Up*, and so of what each individual human *ought* to be, either now or eventually. The human in the adult perfection of its nature has developed a correct full character, a schema of values—a true set of views about goods and bads in human life, of what is worthwhile and what is not—and, with experientially informed, sensitive and creative, reasoning, is able to deliberate correctly to a practical evaluation of what is best or wisest for them to do; then to act on their choice, so as to live well or successfully—to enjoy a properly shaped life.[12] The development of such a character is a norm in the following ways:

(1) First, the young are young, that is immature and undeveloped, precisely in that they have not as yet developed such a character. The adolescent and childish are so through *failing* to develop it by the time they should. Their actions still flow from passion, when they should flow from choice and full practical evaluations. This may not be their fault. It is for instance thus far possible that most humans, or most humans in some society, fail to develop into mature humans, grown-ups in this characterological sense, but remain as childish drifters. If so, this is a defect, a defect which may, at least in part, lie in the organization of their society. They are, say, so exploited, so socially and culturally deprived, that they are hindered from maturing this way (see Gorki's *Lower Depths*). If so, there is something wrong with that society—it is failing to function as a human social grouping should, failing to achieve its proper ends and satisfy the needs which make human beings essentially social creatures.

(2) Second, it is possible to have developed a full character, and so be in a position to make and to act on choices, but then in the event to *fail* either to make them or else to act on them, as with impulsive and weak akratics.

(3) Third, it is possible to develop a full character, yet *fail* to get it correct: the agent's values are revealed as false against the standard of the norm of correct

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[11] We should distinguish within correct conduct (and feeling) under imperfect conditions between that which we would naturally call fine (for example the heroic, the tender, etc.) and that which we would not but see as necessary and fitting (at best qualifiedly fine): reporting a robbery, calling an ambulance: see, for example, *Pol.* 7.13.1332a7–25.

[12] This could be viewed as a double norm. First there is the norm of developing *some full character*, a set of values—*whether good or bad* (an ethical matter in the sense of Lawrence 2004: 300); then there is the norm set by the correct full character, the *correct* set of correct values. Even this latter is formal to the extent that no substantial claim is yet made about what the correct values are. In a way there is a *single* project, or norm—viz. developing a correct full character, becoming an adult with the correct values, a correct conception of the human good: but there are several different *levels* of error—failing to develop a full character, failing fully to realize a character you have developed, failing to attain the correct full character. An immoralist could agree to all this.

character. That is, the individual can be evaluated against the norm as valuing things they should not, and as disvaluing or else not valuing things they should—absolutely, or perhaps just in degree, or in priority. (For example someone who *chooses* to commit a fraud to support a life of going to the opera or of scientific research shows that he is unjust—that he does not value justice as it should be valued.)[13]

So these notions of human Praxis, of choice and practical evaluation, and of strict, or full, human character line up together. This then by way of background. Our topic is how Aristotle thinks we acquire such a full character: how we transition from living *kata pathos* to living *kata prohairesin*.

2. The acquisition of excellence of character (*NE* 2.1–4)

In *NE* book 1 Aristotle argues that the human good is *eudaimonia* (1.4, 1095a17–20; 1.7, 1097a24–b21); and that—as intimated by its synonyms, *euzoia*, living successfully, and *eupraxia*, acting successfully—it consists in a life of distinctively human life-activity, and this is a practical form of life (*praktikē zōē*), i.e. a life of Praxis, of chosen reason-involving activity, done successfully; and for it to be done successfully is for it to be done in accord with the excellence(s) proper to it (1.7, 1097b22–98a20). Consequently, to give us a still clearer account of *eudaimonia*, he then proposes to examine *human* excellence (1.13, 1102a5–7). To do so, we need to consider the human soul, or human living, at least in the broad outline suited to the political purpose of our investigation (1.13, 1102a13–23; 23–6; see 1.2, 1094a26–b11; 1.4, 1095a14–17). Here Aristotle first distinguishes within non-rational life-faculties between (a) the nutritive soul, which has nothing to do with reason and is shared even by plants, and whose excellence is thus no part of specifically human excellence (1102a32–b12, 29–30; see 6.12, 1144a9–11), and (b) a further non-rational, 'appetitive and generally orectic' element that yet 'in a way partakes in reason' (1102b30–1103a1; see *EE* 2.8, 1224a23–5). This latter is non-rational in that it can oppose or strive against reason, as in the akratic and enkratic (1102b14–26; *EE* 2.8); yet it can also hear or obey reason, as it does in the enkratic (b26–7); it may even be completely obedient and in tune with reason, as in the temperate and courageous (b27–8).[14] This element can thus be viewed rather as one that 'has reason' *in a way*, that is, with a qualification. Given that, we can instead make a distinction within *rational* life-faculties between two different elements, (E1) one that 'has reason' in this *qualified* sense—of 'being able to listen to one's father', (E2) the other *'strictly* and in itself', that is, *unqualifiedly.* This latter includes not only the 'fatherly' voice of instruction and admonition, but also other strictly intellectual functions (1103a1–3; see *EE* 2.1, 1219b28–30). In line with this initial division of elements in human rational life-capacities, Aristotle distinguishes *human* excellences into the *characterological* (*ethikai*), such as liberality and temperance, and the *intellectual* (*dianoetikai*), such as theoretical wisdom (*sophia*), good judgement (*sunesis*: see 6.10), and practical wisdom (*phronēsis*) (1103a3–10).[15]

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[13] *Pace* Anscombe (1981a: 70–1). I pursue this case further in another paper.

[14] (a) The enkratic described in 1.13 seems one whose recalcitrant emotional part ultimately comes to order or is quieted ('obeys'), albeit *not as promptly* as the emotional part of the virtuous, the fully temperate, whose desires straightway fall into alignment with their perception of the situation confronting them: as it were someone reluctantly, or grudgingly, coming round to the perspective of the virtuous. A different case would have the enkratic's tempting emotions still out of order—still *not* listening or obeying—even although defeated (*NE* 7.9, 1151b34–52a3; *EE* 2.8, 1224b16–17). The agent, though in no doubt about what they should do, about the correctness of their action, is still to a degree tempted and tormented. (b) Being, or becoming, in tune with reason, is, I take it, consistent with the 'action-al displacement' of

Aristotle turns first to the excellences of *character* and, rather than begin by defining them, asks how we acquire them (2.1–4). There are three main traditional candidates (for example 10.9, 1179b20ff; *Meta.* 9.5, 1047b31ff; see 1099b9–11; *Meno* 70a1–4, *Clit.* 407b): (1) *teaching* (*didaxis*), in the restricted sense of an intellectual rational transfer of knowledge, in 'the form of systematic verbal exposition' (Taylor 1976: 89)—I suspect this restricted sense of 'teaching' is tied to imparting *understanding*, that is, transferring the *why* of something, not simply the *that* of it; (2) *nature*—we are simply born good or bad in these aspects, a matter of blood; and (3), third, some kind of *accustomization* or habituation (*ethismos*), training or practice (*askesis*), or cultivation (*melete; epimeleia*) (for example 3.5, 1114a7–10; 10.9, 1180a1, 25, 29 etc.; Xen. *Memorabilia* 31.9.3). A typical Aristotelian resolution to such a traditional dispute would strive to find each candidate a more specific role, and by thus refining their respective contributions achieve an integrative account that released the truth obscurely contained in each of the candidate opinions. Such a resolution is offered in *Pol.* 7.13, 1332a38–b11 (see1327b36–8; 1334b6; 1338b4), and is perhaps the upshot of the *NE* (see 10.9, 1179b18–31)—and follows Protagoras

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emotions—emotions that would naturally have issued in action need not disappear, but can be transmuted in various ways, into regretful, wistful, and wishful thoughts, into 'oh-that-it-might-have-beens', and 'if-onlys'. The desired action may be satisfied in the theatre of the imagination. This seems quite consistent with *full virtue*. For real temptation, one supposes an agent is open to the tempting course of action as a real possibility for them (temptation is not an easy notion, and there is much greyness in an action's being or becoming a real possibility, greyness of the 'not even if God looked into their mind... ' sort).

[15] This preliminary, or popular model, of soul division in 1.13, while appealing, is somewhat suspect, especially in the confined role it suggests for habituation. (i) For surely with perception, even if something is given by nature, yet much is acquired by familiarization and training (for example what an adult human, or a vole or a bee, is capable of noticing): it is surely in many ways a capacity that is developed and constantly developing. (ii) Or again with our rational excellences—as with learning to speak, or to add—it is not simply a matter of natural powers and then rational teaching: we need training also in the practices of reasoning, of taking something as a reason for another. (Alternative (ii) is perhaps unfair depending on the import of '*to pleion*'—'for the most part'—at 1103a15 which may allow roles for other factors besides teaching in the intellectual excellences (and yet see 6.11, 1143b6–9).)

(DK 80 B3: 'teaching requires nature and practice') and Xenophon's Socrates (*Mem.* 3.9.1–3). But in *NE* 2.1–4 it is habituation that is presented as *the* key to character acquisition—much as in the closely parallel, and clearly influential, passage, *Laws* 653b6–c4.[16]

The endoxastic method clarifies our understanding of these traditional notions of nature, habituation, and teaching, by allotting them their respective roles and thus refining them (for example Lawrence 2006: 73–4n5). Yet in *this* case the method represents only a partial advance and leaves much still to ask about the nature, variety, and complexity of all three notions. For example, there are many different forms of training: training a parrot, or mynah, to 'speak' is different from training a child, although talk of 'training' rather than of nature or teaching is appropriate. Again, how does training to type compare with training to run a marathon, to play the piano, to act, teach, or nurse? Or again training in the basic ability to lob with training in when to lob, or with what force, or how often, or with what kind of racket, or to which opponent, or with what purpose (to win a game, to train another, or...?) (see 3.1, 1111a3–6). And can one really distinguish some mere 'basic' ability from the rest? Yet nonetheless one begins somewhere simple—'the basic moves'—although its proper future and complexity is so implicit, pregnant or curled up, in it from the beginning. However, our wish that Aristotle pursued these questions need not indicate a basic fault with the endoxastic method, so much as a danger that its agenda may be overly set by the happenstance of contemporary controversy and obscure the need to press the method into further detail. What is really difficult seems curiously avoided (see further section 5).

But why does Aristotle begin with the question of acquisition rather than definition? For a start, understanding something's genesis can illuminate and constrain the account of its nature (see for example *Pol.* 1.2, 1252a24–5).[17] But at least equally powerful is Aristotle's *pragmatic aim*: our aim is to *become* good, to *acquire* human excellence of character, and not merely to learn, theoretically, *what* it is (1103b26–9; 1095a4–11; 1179a35-b4). And to *be* or *become* good, we don't *yet* know whether any or all of us need to *understand* what it is to be good or bad—any more than we all need to become doctors, understanders of health, in order either to be, or to become, physically healthy: many *are* naturally healthy without *being* doctors themselves, many *become* healthy without *becoming* doctors—they pay others for their treatment (1143b21–33): so is soul health and soul care any different? Of course *if* we take it with Socrates that such ethical excellences just *are* forms of understanding the human goods and bads in their respective areas—which wisdom then integrates into an understanding of human good and bad overall, thus imposing some unity requirement—then it *is* pragmatic *first* to ask *what* they are. For such understanding constitutes the virtues and so to acquire it is precisely to become good, as in the theoretic sciences, where to become a geometer is simply a matter of acquiring the relevant understanding (*EE* 1.5, 1216b2–25 cf. 2.4, 1106a23–6; a33–b2). However, with the characterological excellences, this is evidently not the case: we *don't* propagate virtue simply by teaching it, in the sense of explaining what it is, nor acquire it simply by listening to accounts of what it is, without our own appreciation of the *thats* (see 1105b11–18; 1179b4–18; *Meno* 89c1–96d3 etc.).[18]

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[16] It is likely this passage that Aristotle has in mind in his reference to Plato at *NE* 2.3, 1104b10–13 (so for example Burnet 1990; Gauthier and Jolif 1958–9) [see 10.1, 1172a20; *Pol.* 8.6, 1340b36]. Aristotle finds confirmation of the centrality of habituation here in the etymological connection he descries between *ethos* (habit) and *ēthos* (character): *NE* 2.1, 1103a17–18; *MM* 1.6, 1186a2; see Plato *Laws* 7, 792e1–2.

[17] Aristotle here anticipates Burnyeat (1980: 69). In the ordering of 2.1–6, Aristotle is, I suspect, intentionally, if implicitly, criticizing Platonic methodology, as it appears specifically in the *Meno's* claim that one cannot settle how virtue is acquired before determining its nature (see *Meno* 71b3ff; 86d3–6; 100b4–7): for the Aristotelian challenge to this Platonic '*ti* prior to *poion*' principle see for example *De An* 1.1, 402b17–25.

The division of the soul in *NE* 1.13, and the corresponding alignment of the excellences, already set up habituation as the primary answer. There is a part, or capacity, of the human that, unlike nutritive life-capacities, is not a matter of mere 'natural' control (1.13, 1102a32–b12; b29–30; 6.12, 1144a9–11), yet is not *itself* a strictly, or purely, rational matter. It belongs in some way also to animals which lack reason, yet it is not like their digestive systems: and in some animals this part can even listen, in variously qualified senses, to (human) reason—for some animals are trainable and tamable in various ways, *domesticatable*—can be brought into the human 'home', in multifarious ways. So there is not a straight alternative between nature and reason—the possibilities are richer. This part is not per se rational, at least not rational from the get go. It can oppose reason: a dog can disobey his master's voice (though not quite in the sense that a child disobeys a parent, nor yet again a soldier his captain). Aristotle refers to it as 'the appetitive and generally desiderative part' (1102b30); it is the sole source of action and emotion in beasts and young children. But in humans this part is, *of its nature, reason-apt*, capable of being brought, or moulded, into a condition where it *listens to* and obeys the voice of reason—first the *external* voice of one's father and mother, tutor or *paidagogos*, and so on (10.9, 1180b3–7; *Protag.* 325C–E; *NE* 3.12, 1119b13–15 etc.), and then the *internalized* 'fatherly' voice of one's own reason (1.13, 1102b13–03a3; see *EE*.2.1, 1220a10–11; *Pol.* 7.14, 1333a16–18). The existence of emotionally charged, and emotionally oriented, practices of admonition, censure, and exhortation show that this part is open to the impact of externally voiced reason, but *persuadable* by it only 'in a way', a qualified, not fully rational, persuasion (1102b33–03a1). (And don't thirst and anger 'listen' to reason in different ways, even in a human?) Not being strictly rational, it is not teachable, in the sense of intellectual transfer, and this is enough to distance us from Socratic intellectualism (see 6.13, 1144b17–20; 28–30). This part then, in a human, is *amenable to reason*; its good states essentially involve its ability to listen to reason, to *follow* it—not simply to be trained so as to *accord, chime, or harmonize with* it (see for example 2.6, 1106b36–1107a2). It is thus essentially reason-leaning, and, when properly developed, becomes fully *intertwined* with, or illuminated by, reason ('with' not merely 'in accord': 1144b26–32).

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[18] Aristotle will tread a mid-path. Although he rejects the simple Socratic *identification* of a virtue with knowledge of good and bad in its field—a knowledge which when thought about is seen to require wisdom and all the 'knowledges' of the other virtues (see McDowell 1979: 332–3 [= McDowell 1998: 52–3]—he nonetheless claims it is 'with knowledge', a rational illumination of the emotional part of the soul that equally brings with it that demand for a unity of the virtues evident in the Socratic picture (6.13, 1144b17–30).

How exactly we are to conceive of this result is a key question (along with that of the transition from living *kata pathos* to living *kata prohairesin*). Does the progression to such fully rationalized, or rationally illuminated or sensitive, feelings end at a place where the achievement of such full integration, the creation of a (mature) person, dissolves the distinction between the parts whose very integration is precisely the task of such development—the interest and availability of the distinction being due to the way in which, or materials from which, such human development to maturity takes place, and to ways in which it can fail to be achieved or can break down and come apart (as in *akrasia*)? The aim of our development is to achieve, to construct, a certain kind of psychic unity and wholeness out of initially disparate materials. As with Plato, part of the task of reason is to make us into a unified whole. How then would the end product of this development, so conceived, differ from Socratic intellectualism? The emotions are not discarded, nor are they relegated to being an extra element whose proper function is to be trained to aid execute the commands of reason. It is rather that emotions have been rationalized—become expressions of reason—and reason emotionalized: without the emotions there would not be a large chunk of human life for reason to work up into values, as indeed there is not for Aristotle's god. And take away god, and his metaphysical form of activity, the question of where reason gets its ends becomes pressing, as it did for Hume.[19]

3. The habituation/accustomization account (*ethismos*)

As said above, in *NE* 2.1 Aristotle turns first to the excellences of character, and to the question of their acquisition. Teaching is apparently set aside as being the mode by which to a large extent (*to pleion*) we acquire and develop the excellences of intellect. By contrast we acquire the excellences of character by habit. Aristotle's focus is on denying that we acquire them by nature (1103a18–19).[20] (The position does not seem to differentiate between a claim that we are born with them fully formed, and one that they develop, but do so *naturally*, like physical growth.) He offers three arguments. (i) The behaviour of natural things cannot be changed by habituation (1103a19–26); (ii) with *innate* capacities, like sight, the capacity comes first, its activity later; but with excellences, as with skills—at least those like building and lyre-playing—we evidently acquire the capacity only by first engaging in the activity, or at least in its trainee-version (1103a26–b6); (iii) excellences, again like skills, come about and are destroyed (i.e. the corresponding vice engendered) by the same things: it is *from* ϕ-ing well or successfully that we become good ϕ-ers, from ϕ-ing badly, bad ϕ-ers (see *EE* 2.1, 1220a26–8, 31–2). We are not *born* good or bad ϕ-ers–if we were, we would not need teachers or guidance in order to ϕ well and not badly, but we evidently do: for it is by being habituated to fear and optimism in danger that we become, for example, courageous or cowardly (1103b6–22).[21]

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[19] See Hume (1874–5; 1975, second *Enquiry*, Appendix 1, Section 242; 2000, 3.3.1). Moreover what is the source of value for intellectual rational pursuits themselves, like mathematics?—is it just reason itself (as apparently with Plato), or are their intellectual emotions that Aristotle has neglected, although he will talk here of pure pleasures? There is curiosity and puzzlement. Are these emotions?

From (iii) emerges the key principle of the habituation account:

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[20] Why? (a) Is it that he will later allow some role to teaching (see 1179b23–4; as also to advice)? But he does the same for nature. (b) Is it then that he takes the problems for straight intellectual teaching to be sufficiently clarified by Plato (for example *Meno* 89c1–96d3—see *NE* 10.9, 1180b28–81b12)—the Platonic attack on the Socratic *technē* model of the virtues? And he supposes the case against nature is relatively undeveloped? (And it appears undeveloped in the *Meno*—indeed, the stand on nature there is somewhat unclear. The *Meno* seems both to espouse a position whereby the excellences are already naturally in the soul, just waiting to be recollected [see Sharples, 1985: 14], and yet also to claim that we are not good by nature (a) on the hypothetical argument of 86e2–89a7 and (b) the further observational point, 89b1–9; and later that neither knowledge *nor true belief* arises in humans by nature [98c8–d6].) I remain somewhat puzzled by Aristotle's strategy.

[21] 1103b12 surprisingly refers to the need for someone to teach (*didaskein*). (A) This may be taken in a *broad* sense, inclusive of habituation—a sense in which for example the *paidagogos* of 3.12, 1119b14 might be called a teacher, or the person offering guidance at 2.4, 1105a23. Aristotle reverts to '*ethizomenoi*' at 1103b15. (B) Alternatively, Aristotle is willing to countenance talk of *didaxis* in connection with skills (*technai*), while the excellences of character require *ethismos* (see *manthanein* at 1103a32–4 in connection with skills) (so, I think, Burnet 1900: 77 and 75–7; see the contrast on this point for example in *Meno* 90b7–e9). This would indicate that Aristotle's main concern here was to deny a natural origin in favor of *some kind* of acquisition (rather than habituation in particular); and would presumably reflect the different range of conditions on coming to possess a skill and a character excellence evidenced in *NE* 2.4, and a presumed possibility that skills can be *forgotten* in a way practical wisdom cannot (see 1140b28–30; see further note 78 below.) Yet it would be in some tension with argument (ii) above—witness the skills that Aristotle instances there, house-building and lyre playing, and not for example grammar; and would seem in tension with the whole thrust of *NE* 2.4's objection and Aristotle's double reply which apparently assumes he offers a habituation account for both skills and character excellences. But see further the discussion under section 5.

LSLA: *'Like State from Like Activity'*: states of character, both excellences and defects, come not by nature but from *similarly qualified* activities: i.e. a V-qualified state, or human, arises from V-qualified activities (1103b21–2) (where 'V' is a virtue/vice predicate).[22]

A human acquires a temperate state from doing temperate activities, a just state from doing just actions, and *pari passu* for the defects or vices.

Since activities are thus 'in charge' of states, it immediately follows that it is crucial that one's activities or actions be rendered *correctly qualified* (1103b22–3; 29–31), and are so rendered from the get-go—this is virtually all important (1103b23–5; see 1104b11–13; 1179b31; *Laws* 653b6–c4). The importance of this is reinforced by the relative fixity of states. Once acquired, they are hard, if not impossible, to change: voluntary in their inception, they are not in our, or others', power to change later, or not easily (3.5, 1114b30–1115a3, 1114a12ff, etc.; 10.9, 1179b16–18; 7.10, 1152a29–33; 1.10, 1100b12–17; see *Cat.* 8b26–9a13; for such change, 13a18–36, esp. 23–31; see also 5.9, 1137a4–26; *Phaedrus* 268b).

There appear two aspects to the above:

(R) *the natural effect of activity repetition*: it is a natural, and supposedly obvious, bedrock fact about human nature (and some other organic natures) that, for a certain range of human activities, repeatedly doing the activity as qualified in a certain way results in the disposition so qualifiable (itself a disposition to do acts so qualified)[23], i.e. LSLA; and further that such repetition is the only way in which dispositions in these areas are formed. These facts underwrite a notion of practice—of the possibility of attaining competence by practice,[24] and of the necessity of practice in its attainment (see 3.5, 1114a9–10).

(M) *the malleability of the activity or agent*: it is a natural fact that such activities can acquire, or be given, a certain character, or rather that the agent be led, or induced, into engaging in an activity of a certain character.[25]

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[22] I take the context—the preceding 1103b6–21 and the consequence drawn at 1103b22—to show clearly that this is the principle at issue, where the similarity is between activity and state, and not, as Irwin supposes, a similarity between activities 'i.e. that habituation involves the repetition of the same sort of activity in the same conditions' (1985a: 311): that point, while true, is not asserted here.

[23] And according to whether the state is good or bad, excellence or defect, it represents a kind of mastery or competence, or failure thereof, as regards attaining the proper end of the action, feeling, or skilled activity at issue.

[24] Or incompetence too—understood as a matter of being badly disposed (having bad habits), as against being simply as yet ignorant or untrained.

[25] Does (R) entail (M)? (1) If such an activity is done at all, then it must be done in some way or other, i.e. be qualified in certain ways, *poios* (a conceptual claim). But *ex hypothesi* the agent is not set up by nature to do the activity as qualified in any particular way—otherwise it would be a matter of a natural innate state (nature may perhaps set outer limits or parameters: for example one can't shout louder than *that*). So the qualifications of the activity are not there by nature. Must they then be *acquired*? That depends how one understands 'acquire'. For all that has been said, the starting set of qualifications may be arbitrary and accidental. Thus the infant, say, cries—and must do so with a certain intensity and at a certain juncture, etc.—and from this

This in turn has two aspects, receptive and acquisitive: (Mi) a 'receptive' aspect, or 'impressionability', in that the trainee agent can be moulded, led into the practice of certain kind of activity from the outside, and intentionally so by others, and (Mii) an 'acquisitive' aspect in that the subject is naturally primed for such acquisition, molding, inculcation, or manipulation: is, so to speak, looking to be imprinted. (The natural human tendency to *imitation* plays a key role here, whether or not it lies at the bottom of *every* susceptibility to training: imitation itself is obviously intricate—as it were a practical stance, or sensitivity, on the look out for '*same again*', or to be guided to 'same again'—a disposition to pattern detection and pattern repetition, to 'same again', to rules.)[26]

These facts of human nature, (R) and (M), create the possibility of the intentional intervention and inculcation of character—and indeed the need for it: how else can we reliably secure that people will grow up good (i.e. with the excellences)? This is made all the more crucial by the fact that the trainable go more than halfway to meet this (Mii): humans are naturally imitative, and so will tend to take on or acquire *whatever* is there to imitate (there are presumably natural weightings to detect patterns of certain sorts). So (Mii) can occur without (Mi). Given this, it is crucial that what is there for them to imitate, domestically and socially, be of appropriate character; and that this is not left to happy accident but overseen and attention drawn to it, and so on. (Conversely, Mi can occur without Mii, in the sense that an attempt at inculcation can always fail).

The account is developmental, and initially looks doubly developmental. (a) Habituation, like learning to read (Wittgenstein 1953: §§156–78, esp. §157a), is

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arbitrary starting point is led into repetition, or desistance or variation, by the response, intentional or unintentional, it provokes—the 'reward' and 'punishment', pleasure, and pain, attendant on these initially arbitrary essays and forays (of interest here irrational human strategies in plays from arbitrary 'valuations'—the notion of 'arbitrary coherence' (see Ariely 2009: ch. 2)—the kind of irrationality is suggestive of natural programmes). If so, then this is open to intentional manipulation by external influences. (2) Alternatively we may suppose that the initial action does, or can, have a character *naturally*—and if so there would be already be an innate state or disposition—but that nonetheless this is, in these cases, open to external alteration and development: for example a trainee brick-layer or plasterer may have a natural dexterity or aptitude. (In many cases, these will be rather enabling, or disenabling, conditions.) Moreover this initial natural state may be thin: just a 'starter-kit' disposition to a certain set of natural starting points, initial 'settings', themselves immediately open to modification by reinforcement or diminution.

[26] The fight over the interpretation of pattern, norm, rule, regularity, nature, etc. etc. between the 'flat' empiricist reading which sees mere repetition and perhaps psychological expectation ('expectations of what?' one wants straightaway to ask. 'That it will or that it ought?'), and the 'rationalist' reading which allows proper normativity into the world: real 'oughts', types of connection the atomizing constructivist empiricist will not allow. (Does not even his basic matter—whatever he chooses—have a way in which it behaves as being the kind of thing it is: can he destroy the concept of nature all the way down? And even if he can, can he build it up from there—say, to explain my chess game?)

itself something temporally extended and progressive: it cannot happen in an instant (a grammatical remark).[27] And (b) habituation is *only one* element, although perhaps the most central, in a more elaborate developmental story, with roles, as we saw (see p.241–2), also for nature and reason—and also sensitivity and imagination, experience and creativity, acculturation, and socialization. But such a division is somewhat crude: for what one is being habituated in changes its content over time, and draws increasingly on reason, perception, and experience, developing sensitivity and imagination. That is, habituation itself has different parts, or stages, which involve other elements.[28] (i) There is initially training, so to speak, in the basic vocabulary of feeling and action, in their 'forms' (like learning to articulate certain sounds, or hold a pencil and shape one's letters); (ii) training in the appropriate situational placing of such responses (like sentences)—where the learner, often through play, starts to widen his sense of them precisely as *responses* to situations (the germ of which is already included in the infant's initial natural tendency to imitative response), and to broaden his repertoire of available responses, and his sense of the intricacy of their dimensions or many aspects (see for example 2.3, 1104b21–4; 2.6, 1106b18–24; 3.1, 1110b33–1111a6); (iii) there is also an important aspect or stage of socialization. Much of what is involved here is induction into social practices, and the inculcation of a sense of social routine, familiarity, and expectation in the trainee, that '*this* is what *we* do here';[29] (iv) coming oneself to formulate and refine responses, and to feel and understand for oneself the appropriateness, merit, or beauty, of such responses—both on one's own part and on that of others and so forth: that this is what *should*, or *should not*, be done here, that is, a sense of things properly ordered. Much then is involved in getting activities 'correctly qualified'—and in particular in the transition from their being merely 'in accord with' what correct reasoning demands (*kata logon*) to their being themselves reason-involving, evaluative, responses on the part of the agent (*meta logou*) (see further section 6).

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[27] I.e. generally it makes no sense to say 'he fell into the habit at once!' Or rather it is a joke, going against the grain of the grammar, and, even so, indicating to the listener what happened *afterwards*, and so implicitly relying on temporal spread as criterion. With abilities and skills/ arts (*technai*) things are more complex. It is not unintelligible that some abilities can be acquired in, and by, a single acting—as someone might simply take to the bicycle, get on it and, perhaps with an initial wobble, ride off (issues can be raised about 'a single acting'); or learning to put contact lenses in. But (a) even in such cases it may take more practice; (b) skills, or arts—*technai*—are systematic bodies of knowledge and techniques where it seems to make no sense to suppose one could acquire them at a single juncture.

[28] Compare 1953: §156, where even the 'reading' that Wittgenstein is using as an illustration is a version pared down merely to 'the activity of rendering out loud what is written or printed', without understanding, and even so would have its different stages—as generally with the learning of language (1953: §7).

[29] 'Hail to the spirit who can link us: because we live in symbols, really. And with tiny steps the clocks walk beside our primal day' (Rilke 2005: 12); see Nussbaum (1986: ch. 4) on Protagoras on measurement, and measurement's link initially to what is one and the same for all—until the introduction of '*second measurement*'; on the mean relative to us: Plato *Statesman* and Aristotle *NE* 2.6; 6.7.1141a22ff.

(*Comment 1*) *Habituation and Upbringing* *Ethismos* is usually understood as an *intentional* process of inculcation of character by the characterizing of action and reaction in a repetitive pattern—practice—under outside guidance, and likely this is Aristotle's own view:

> since character—just as its name [*ethos*] indicates—has its development from custom [*ethos*], and that is habituated which, by a guidance [*agoge*] that is not innate, is many times changed in some way.... (*EE* 2.3, 1220a39–b2; see *Rhet.* 1.10, 1369b6–7; 1.11, 1370a5–9)

And certainly it *can* be an intentional process of accustomization—as with the active *ethizein* and a human subject at 2.1, 1103a22 and b4–5. But if understood as an intentional process—for example the *agoge* of the *paid-agogos*, and as talk of 'guidance' naturally suggests—then, while perhaps normatively standard, habituation is not plausibly *necessary* as a way to acquire character, not even good character. Alternatively, habituation is a process by which character forms simply from a repetition of a V-qualified action, *whether or not* this occurs as a matter of (repeated) *intentional* guidance. Then it is more plausible to suppose it necessary.

The root idea seems the indeterminate one that some things, if altered in some way and this is repeated, 'take on' this new direction, or determination, of behaviour, others do not, however often they are so subjected (see *EE* 2.3, 1220a39–b2 above), something that might cover the *training of certain plants* up a wall. Human beings are like this with respect to kinds of action and reaction, and the appreciation of a certain order: training in music of certain types is held to have certain character effects. With humans, their trainability, both in its objects and its particular methods, is replete with human intelligence in a general sense (Anscombe, 1981b: 101). Human nature requires this trainability for its perfection, and itself *reaches out* for it: for, conversely, the human is 'the most *imitative* of animals and makes its first learnings through imitation' (*Poet.* 4.1448b5–8); it naturally loves and enjoys learning, and working out and recognizing that 'this is that' (b12–17; compare *Rhet.* 1.11, 1371b4–10; and 'same again'), presumably in actions as well as in paintings.[30] The kind of trainings and habituations humans undergo are rich and various; they are often layered, the acquisition of some opening avenues to others—often crookedly layered, in the sense of no one straight route or straightforward hierarchy, but different paths and orders of approach. For all its variety, this kind of trainability, like the imitative tendency, seems a bedrock fact about humanity (this doesn't mean there is any guarantee of its 'taking' in an individual case).[31]

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[30] The habituation I suspect is viewed as in part the inculcation of an increasingly discriminatory sensitivity to the presence of some supposed universal, whose presence is detected before it can be articulated. One will be trained to track this in similar circumstances, and then to recognize the same thing in different surroundings (see Plato *Republic* 402a–b; *Meno* 85c9–d1). A fuller treatment would take off from Anscombe's (1981d) work on stopping and starting modals.

Our talk of 'upbringing', or 'raising' (*paideia*; *trophe*; *epimeleia*), is equally complex—evident in the various ways 'upbringers', domestic and social, can be said to bring up badly: (a) the dispositions they aim to inculcate are in fact bad; (b) bad or not, they do a bad job of inculcating them—and this in various ways;[32] (c) or, irresponsibly, they abandon their charges to develop or fall into habits, bad or good, on their own ('but it was no upbringing at all'): there can be upbringers then who fail their task by failing even to engage in it. Now some, like street children in Calcutta or Rio, may seemingly lack upbringers, good or bad, altogether, and yet nonetheless form characters, good or bad, from a hodge-podge of accidental external influences—much as a child may simply pick up language, well or badly, from the social environment without anyone bothering or going out of their way, to teach, or talk to, them.[33] So upbringing, like habituation, viewed roughly as *intentional guidance*, does not seem obviously necessary to develop a character (*pace* Burnyeat 1980: 72; whether *pace* Aristotle is perhaps not so clear).

However that is, clearly, given the Like State/Like Activity principle, LSLA, attentive and responsible intentional habituation and upbringing is crucially important—and it is, Aristotle thinks, dangerously neglected, especially on the societal level (10.9, *passim*, esp. 1180a24–30). Moreover, just as the standard way to acquire language involves training by various people, and intentional exposure to linguistic environments and social settings, so the *standard* way to acquire a good character is by being well *brought up*, inducted and trained in personal and social practices (see *orthē paideia*, 1104b13)—with intentional exposure to behavioural environments (see *Pol.* 7.17, 1336a39–b34; *Rep.* 401b–c, etc.) by those responsible for so doing: typically parents, the extended family, and their community. Indeed, Aristotle thinks our nature primes us for such guidance (10.9, 1180b5–7; see Broadie 1991: 110). But 'standard' does *not* mean 'necessary', and one's path to virtue may be *accidental*, a series of lucky breaks—and one owes no one love, loyalty, or thanks (see Plato *Rep.* 520a–b), although, even in deprivation, there will often be obscure and distant *debts*, to a radio programme, to Bach, or the local baker. Yet equally 'standard' here is not a merely statistical notion: it is rather the way we humans do things—a fact of human life (see Wittgenstein 1953: §6b).

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[31] See further Burnyeat (1980); Sherman (1989: ch. 5); Broadie (1991: 103–10); Kraut (1997: 145–6).

[32] Michael Pakaluk suggested the following as various ways: 'inconsistent upbringing (for example a rule is set down but not, or not consistently, enforced); divided upbringing (parents are divided, and children exploit this by playing one against the other); spoiling and indulging (a parent who aims to win the child's affection rather than make the child good); etc'. A look at some parental guidance books would doubtless enlarge the catalog of such dangers and errors.

[33] Whether we think of these too as badly brought up depends on whether we suppose there was an agency *by* whom they were badly brought up, and neglected—i.e. a responsible entity: were there parents or extended family? their community at large? But what if they are illegal immigrants? Is the community to which they have attached themselves, thereby responsible? Is there a larger common human responsibility, or is there so in societies with certain capacities—and could they then be flooded by those in genuine need? etc.

The area is difficult. Above we have contrasted intentionally guided repetition—with its explicit techniques of command, admonition, censure, and encouragement (see 1.13, 1102b34–03a1)—to repetition that is not intentionally guided. But this contrast is misleading in the following, connected, ways.

(A) Intentional versus contextual guidance

We are in danger of overdoing the intentional and intellectual element. There is a further, somewhat rough, contrast we may draw between the explicit intentional guidance above and what I shall call *contextual guidance*. There are certain human contexts or frames—political, social, and domestic—in which a person or child is placed and where the context itself supplies, or resonates with, guidance, a sense of what is done and not done, a sense of *implicit* expectation—a sense of what behaviour will be met with smiles and what with frowns, of what moves will be appreciated and what not. This is made explicit in intentional guidance but can remain implicit. Thus much parental behaviour serves as exemplars to children—some because it is explicitly done as intentional guidance, and attention drawn to its features and appropriateness, but much more serves as implicit example because of the nature of the domestic frame: parents are simply looked to.[34] This is very evident in the need parents sometimes feel explicitly to cancel the potential exemplary effect of something they have done: 'don't you do what I did—it was wrong: learn from my mistake'. The importance of such contexts is shown also by the concern of parents, and others, that their children should move in the right 'milieu': for who knows what they might pick up elsewhere? Such concern often culminates in misplaced elitism, focused on social advancement. But there is obviously place for a proper concern here: the company of the good has its benefits, that of the corrupt its dangers (see for example *Laws* 656b–657c2). There is also the important frame of public behaviour set by the laws.[35] Thus one may worry about what 'message' is being sent children about the possible treatment of human beings when they live in states that countenance the legalized inhumanity and cruelty of the death penalty (so exposed by Dostoyevsky and Victor Hugo among others, and recently by the Iranian film *Daybreak*).

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[34] 'The story of the burgher Schmuel, whose elderly father kept spilling soup on the tablecloth because of his trembling fingers. One evening the old man dropped a fine teacup and it fell to the floor and broke. 'From now on you will eat in your room, Father,' declared Schmuel. 'Here is a wooden bowl for you to use. This you cannot break!' The next day Schmuel came home and saw his very young son sitting on the floor trying to carve out a chunk of wood.... 'It's for you, Father' the son explained, 'so you can use it to eat in your room when you are old and your hands start to shake' (Mogel 2001: 63–4).

[35] This may not fit neatly into the somewhat crude distinction of intentional and contextual.

In short, we are, ordinarily, *in the swim* of our human practices. Even *in talking to another* we are engaging in a human practice and, as in language, so also in all the other social ways and interactions of life, we are keeping ourselves and each other in line, in normative line of expectation and surprise, sustaining and developing the living practice—a kind of cultural *grooming* in rationally sensitive practice: even without explicit or conscious correction, we are engaged typically in mutual adjustment and correction as an everyday, often hardly noticed, part of our ordinary practices, of our ordinary training and then maintenance as a participant in the practice, by *enmeshment and immersion.*[36] Think simply of how people walk down crowded streets—do we do that just like herds of antelope, wilderbeest, or moose on the move? No—and conversations are more complexly crowded streets.

(B) Imitation: The subject's natural tendency to adopt characterized action, and to repetitive patterning

The notion of contextual guidance helps shift our attention to the perspective of those in the business of acquiring habits rather than those intentionally inculcating them. Guidance, whether intentional or contextual, is only possible because human beings are primed to be affected this way, to be susceptible to being guided. They have an innate tendency to imitation and so are 'in the business' of acquiring patterns, 'rules', ways of going on, of responding to such guidance.

Now, as with the street children, there may no teacher—no explicit habituator—but the imitator picks on patterns in the context, good or bad, genuine or not—looks to a companion, the ring leader, as exemplar or ideal ('puts X in the role of teacher or hero'). Here again there is a danger of over-intellectual construction. While imitation can of course be a conscious action—in response, for instance, to the instruction 'repeat after me: twice 2 is 4....'—it need not be: the tendency to imitate is something humans have, something it comes naturally to us to do. So it is not *accidental.* We might label it *'pre-intentional'* behaviour. We imitate before we can set ourselves to do so intentionally: think of an infant learning to speak. And as adults, while we often consciously imitate others, we do so even more non-consciously,[37] simply as a matter of human course, part of the human swim. In conversation certain phrases and turns of speech—whole sentences—will travel, will simply be picked up and reproduced, seeming to the speaker, if he was to consider it, to be his very own creation, when but two minutes earlier it was on another's lips. Similarly for intonations of voice and physical mannerisms (I could sometimes recognize people who had met Rogers Albritton simply by a faint echo of his charismatic mannerisms that hung about them), styles of hair and dress, and of course patterns of behaviour, conversation, and opinions.[38]

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[36] There are many aspects to such immersion (for example the observed instruction and correction of others, or reactions to their behaviour).

[37] I say 'non-consciously' rather than 'unconsciously' because of the danger of thinking of such imitation on the model of conscious imitation gone under cover—a submerged mechanism.

(*Comment 2*) *Habituation and Natural Virtue* In *NE* 2.1 Aristotle says the character excellences, the perfections of our adult being, are not in us by nature, nor yet against nature: rather nature comes in simply in the fact that we are naturally constituted to develop such excellences through habit (2.1, 1103a19; 23–6). It is our nature that habit has such a place or role: we are after all social creatures, and there must be space for socialization (for 'being tamed', inducted into the practices of society).[39] This relative abrogation of nature's role in character acquisition in 2.1 seems contradicted by Aristotle's later remark, in 6.13, that

> it seems to everyone that each of the characters exist by nature in a sense: for we are just and temperate and courageous and the rest *straightway from birth*; but nonetheless we seek

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[38] (i) As anyone will know who has experienced for example real sexual jealousy, it is not so hard—apart from the vested anxiety to remain blind (to infidelity and the jealousy in its wake)—to detect, to 'smell', the varied minimal informational traces—an unaccustomed intonation or word—imparted to someone one knows, or loves, by contact with a certain, or any, other (shades of Proust): encounters leave traces. (ii) Again, the immediate judgements—or if that is too grand, the immediate 'take', or 'getting' (see *Philosophical Investigations* 146a)—we all make, however provisionally (our running case-book), on meeting new people, especially for example the immediate read of a person when hitch-hiking: the antennae of what we 'smell' outruns our intellect, our reflective understanding of what we 'smell': we smell first, think later. We are struck by the incredible sense of smell of dogs (or sharks): yet fail to acknowledge—to take into our reflection—our own incredibly sophisticated discriminatory powers. (Naturally many meeting traces, like scents and dreams, evanesce quickly: both of their own accord (for many are not significant) and also under the impact of new meetings and inputs.)

[39] Are we *equally* 'naturally constituted to develop vices of character through habit'—as though nature was a *tabula rasa* in respect of character and our capacities for habit-reception? Or are we rather naturally oriented to develop the excellences through habituation—our ability to be socialized, as being essentially social creatures, being primarily linked to the acquisition of excellences, rather than defects, of character? This is very difficult territory. Two brief remarks. (a) Natural virtue may be thought to play a role here, as it were offering, in Quine's (1969) phrase, 'an innate quality spacing' of natural reactions and responses which provide a natural foundation on which full excellence can be inculcated and built—they 'point' in that direction. (b) Our capacity to imitate (our openness to habituation) is directed towards pattern and order—to notice and respond to patterns, 'repetitions', to what we can recognize as '*same again*' either naturally or be manoeuvred into so taking (see Aristotle's '*this is that*'). Now there may be constraints on what can be presented to us as ordered—limits on the ways we can go wrong, and the bad habits we can acquire (on what can be recognized or inculcated as a rule.) Are we to think of bad habits as corrupted patterns—as encapsulating a seeming order that, while it may superficially pan out in organizing a life, ultimately fails to do so—fails to bring a proper order to our lives as the (social) creatures we actually are, fails, so to speak, to bring order to its human material, the order called for by that material? (No ultimate unity of vices: or such unity as might be so achieved requiring an impoverishment, or curtailment, of our nature as human beings.)

> the strictly good as something else and such things as belonging also in a different way. For the natural states belong to *children and beasts*, but without intelligence appear to be harmful... just as it befalls to a mighty body moving without sight mightily to trip on account of not having sight, so also here. (1144b4–9; see *Hist. An.* 588a.18ff, on natural vices; *NE* 7.5, and bestiality and savagery generally 7.1)

Aristotle here countenances *two forms* in the *ethical* part of the soul, two types of character, natural and proper excellence (1144b14–17; see perhaps 7.1, 1145a27). 2.1 concerns the acquisition of *proper* virtue (*kuria*), and this we don't have by nature. So there is no contradiction after all.

Yet it still leaves us with a series of questions for further investigation: (A) what is *natural* excellence (and defect)? (B) What is its role, if any, in the development of excellence proper? And (C) why should the acquisition of excellence proper be such a hard task even for one who starts equipped with the natural excellences?

Briefly. (A) Natural character excellence, and vice, are presumably matters of being well or badly disposed, in this case, vis-à-vis the forms of feeling and acting *natural* to a certain species of animal, and these in turn matters of being well or badly disposed vis-à-vis their respective ends and their appropriate situational pursuit. For instance, suppose the immediate end of natural anger is defence when oneself, family, or social group, is under threat or attack, then being well disposed is a matter of being inclined to get angry, and pursue its end, effectively under roughly appropriate circumstances, where the effectiveness and appropriateness is set by the species-norm. This immediate end is, Aristotle supposes, describable also in terms of pleasure and pain as the object of pursuit and avoidance. Its specific nature guides a creature by these rudders of pleasure and pain. Natural excellence is to be well disposed, by the canons, or norms of the species in question: so that it enjoys and disenjoys what it naturally should (the naturally correct things—that is, it has and pursues the right natural ends), and enjoys and disenjoys in the manner it naturally should, and at the time it naturally should, and so on. But this description may seem applicable to humans in respect of our full excellence (for we are naturally rational). We must then understand 'natural' here as 'mere nature', opposed to rationality. Humans are capable not merely of being naturally well and badly disposed as above, but also it is part of their nature to develop rational dispositions, where the 'naturally should' is replaced by 'rationally should' (a norm of reason as against one of mere nature).

Natural excellence differs from full excellence in at least these aspects.

(NatE1) *Relative Situational Insensitivity* Aristotle compares a creature equipped with only its natural excellences to a strong body without sight (6.13, 1144b1–14). Taken literally, this seemingly implies a complete situational insensitivity, as though these natural feelings and actions occurred in no relation to the creature's situation. What Aristotle presumably is after is rather myopia than blindness: natural excellence, which lacks rational intelligence, is *relatively* *insensitive* to the variety of situational contours, but is not totally perceptually un-cued: think, for example, of tropistic behaviour. So even when the creature is perfect—in its specifically best natural state—its natural behaviour may often end in trouble or disaster for the individual, because, lacking reason, its nature can only be roughly attuned to reality, both in the discrimination of reality's situational complexity and variety, and in its corresponding repertoire of discriminating response. The point we might say concerns a relative inability of natural programmes to change, or to adapt.[40]

(NatE2) *Independence, Natural Unity, and Integration* The various forms of natural emotion and action operate fairly *independently* of each other, so that, unlike full excellence, it is possible—or rather intelligible—to have natural excellence in one area and not in another (6.13, 1144b32–45a2).[41] (a) However, there are presumably limits even on this natural independence, due to how the various 'spheres', or phases, of a species' life impinge on each other. Thus an individual of some species may be a good mother but a bad forager, where, say, it is for the male to forage for the cubs; yet in another species where it is the mother's job *also* to forage, a defect here would undermine counting as a good mother. These limits are a function of the natural facts, the life form, of the species, rather than of a certain conceptual demand on unqualified proper excellence, where having one fully requires having all the rest because of the maximally sensitive and integrative nature of reason. (b) There is also a question of natural, as against rational, integration, as, say, when feelings of anger and attack vie with ones of fear and flight, or one appetite competes with another (thirst with hunger). Integration is, so to speak, a design problem facing nature. The resolution may be achieved by 'strength' of appetite. This may be accidental and there not be a naturally correct or incorrect solution—and it is simply the appetite that wins that counts as thereby the strongest, there being no natural 'should' or 'shouldn't' over its winning; or there may be natural species norms of weighting and strength—trans-sphere dominance and coordinating functions—with respect to which an individual can be well or badly disposed (second order, or coordinating, excellences and defects).[42] Any such integration will be coarse by comparison with that made available by reason, given the relative situational insensitivity (so the independence of natural excellences is a factor in their relative situational insensitivity).

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[40] Aristotle perhaps here contrasts with Kant. One reason why nature cannot so accurately follow the contours even of practical reality is that reason imports, or constitutes, a richer reality, transmuting and extending the range of emotions and actions, making available an entirely new order of social interaction and culture: it creates the possibility and need for its own responses (for example the possibility of organizing a life-time). But this is not the reason Aristotle appears to have in mind in *NE* 6.13, 1144b1–14.

[41] Might it be that natural excellences are differentially distributed across the species in some evolutionary stable strategy—no individual having the full species-complement of excellences? Aristotle would, presumably, put this in terms of differentiation of function and functional groups within the species (as with human men and women).

[42] This would be a kind of 'natural wisdom', where the creature is disposed and adjusted as best as it can be in the programme of natural weightings to its nature's various prompts. Aristotle seems to apply 'wisdom' to creatures whose behaviour takes account of the future: that aspect of *phronesis* which is brought out by its translation as *providentia* (foresight,

(NatE3) *Natural versus Rational/Valued Ends* An animal is by its nature set up to pursue and avoid certain things as immediate ends, and these are things it *enjoys* or *disenjoys*. It can be naturally well or badly disposed in these regards.[43] But the human is a species whose nature is to develop full excellence, by habituation and socialization. And, by contrast, the end in full excellence (and defect) is the *kalon*—the *beautiful*, the *noble* or *fine*—where agents feel and act in ways they *take* it are *correct* and merited, as constituting the best way to live, as a *recognizably ordered* way of living. The ends nature sets up a kind of natural creature to pursue will be goods (and avoidances of bads) in its life-form—of value to the creature but not seen *as* of value, not valued ends.

(NatE4) *The Relative Vulnerability of Natural Excellence* Natural excellence is more vulnerable to upset, less stable, than full excellence (see NatE1). Operating as it does simply in terms of pleasure and pain—enjoyment and disenjoyment—it is open to upset, and challenge, *from outside* its own sphere or field: thus pleasures and pains the agent feels in other areas of life where they are less well adjusted may upset an excellent natural disposition in one area. And it is open to upset also from pleasures and pains *within its own area*, for the natural excellence is relatively lacking in discrimination even here, and in our discriminations of pleasure and pain 'we are not impartial' (1109b8–9). It has no check, nothing to say it 'nay', only a competing appetite.

(B) But how does natural excellence come in to the development of proper excellence (or natural defect come in to prevent, or hinder, it)? Surely it has

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forethought)—*NE* 6.5, 1141a26–8; see *Pol.* 1.2, 1252a31–2. But strictly speaking there is no natural excellence version of *phronesis* (see perhaps *Top.* 2.11, 115b15–18) the presence of which rationalizes and integrates the excellences—as issuing now in responses viewed by the agent as merited by the situation (although there is *deinotēs*, which for humans is perhaps in part a matter of natural endowment).

[43] The immediate ends of natural emotions and actions—the ends for which the creature in question acts—may in their turn be in the service of further ends, ones so to speak hidden from the creature. If so, then is the further hidden end a reductive one, in the following sense? (i) It might be thought that the possession of a perceptive soul—for Aristotle, the mark of the animal (for example *NE* 1.7, 1098a1–3)—is only a more complicated, and perhaps situationally sensitive, way in which a species of living thing can satisfy the ends of the basic *threptic*, or nutritive, soul—the ends, that is, of growth, self-maintenance, and reproduction. If so, then animals, while more complexly living than plants, are just systems ultimately organized around the very same ends—only equipped with more complex ways of attaining them. There are hints of such a view in Aristotle in the way he contrasts simply being alive (*zēn*) with being able to live well (*eu zēn*), or attain *eudaimonia*, in a sense that only rational creatures can (for example *NE* 1.9, 1099b32–1100a1; see *Pol.* 1.2, 1252b29–30, 1253b24–5; *EE* 1.7, 1217a25ff). (ii) One might then be tempted to view possession of the rational soul too as only an even more complex way for nature to attain threptic ends. Aristotle would reject (ii). And against (i), Aristotle also supposes a *scala naturae* on which animals are higher than plants in being nearer in some sense the divine ideal: see *De Caelo* 2.12; also *EE* 1.5.

some role (see Xen. *Mem.* 3. 9.1–3; *Protag.* 351a; Taylor 1976: 89–90; *Laws* 655d–e; compare *Pol.* 7.7. 1327b36–8). (P1) 3.8, 1117a4–9 suggests that pugnacity is the most *natural* form of courage, although it is not really courage but something resembling it, and becomes courage 'with the *addition* of choice and the <proper> end' (viz. the noble: 3.7, 1115b23–4); (P2) 6.13, 1144b9–14 suggests that when intelligence (*nous*) is *added* to natural virtue, virtue proper results; (P3) 7.8, 1151a15–19 suggests that natural virtue supplies correct *opinions* about the starting points, or ends, of action.[44]

(P1)–(P3) may suggest that natural excellence is a necessary condition for the development of full excellence, something on which the inculcation of full excellence can be piggy-backed—necessary material which can then be extended and illuminated. This seems rather strong, but can be weakened in various ways. Presumably the natural norm must be for humans to be born with the natural excellences.[45] But (i) we may suppose that natural excellence is a somewhat crude cut and is opposed to *pathological defect* (see *NE* 7.5, esp. 1148b18), which, while preventing the acquisition of full virtue, commands pity rather than censure (see 3.5, 1114a23–7; 7.5, 1148b31–a1; *Protag.* 323c–d). So as a needed basis for the development of full virtue it is indeed somewhat distant and indeterminate as a necessary condition, being as necessary for the development of full vice as of full virtue. (ii) Alternatively, we may suppose that while the norm is to have the natural virtues, many (or all) are less fortunate, but that the lack of natural virtue or the presence of natural vice is not, except in extreme pathological cases, a bar on the acquisition of full virtue. Such natural defective tendencies in character can be addressed, worked on, corrected, and refined, by habituation, or if not correctable, then accommodatable—adjustment is made to acknowledge their presence and then to fit them in to a life of full excellence: born with alcoholism in the family, the agent stays a teetotaler, or having anger problems, avoids certain kinds of stress, and so on. It is just that more work and effort is required in their case than in those who are naturally virtuous (for example more *kolasis* is required: see 2.3, 1104b16–18; *Top.*1.11). More plausibly, *NE* 10.9, 1179b20–1180a4 suggests a preparatory role for a kind of *habituated* excellence, that is not yet full excellence (1179b29–31), and stresses the importance of correct public laws as providing a more authoritative guidance than the paternal voice (1180a18–22) to induct and accustom the young to properly socialized behaviour and values.

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[44] There is some puzzle about how to square (P3) with (P1) if the starting points are opinions about what it would be fine or base to do. One might think here rather of habituated excellence (see 1179b23–31). The phrase in *NE* 7.8 is 'excellence either natural or habituated', so we do not have a corrective 'or <rather>'. Perhaps Aristotle is simply leaving it open at this point.

[45] Norm in the normative, and not statistical, sense. That is, *the human is born naturally courageous etc.*, i.e. with all the natural excellences. This is normative in the sense that it sustains talk of 'oughts' and 'defects' in regard to individuals of the species: this human ought to be naturally courageous and is defective in being so timid. It is consistent with this that most, indeed all, humans do not have the natural excellences.

(C) But why if one is born with natural excellence should the acquisition of full excellence be so hard? The answer lies in the differences between natural and full excellence. The development of a full rational sensitivity is hard—for it is many-faceted and can follow the contours not just of stock situations, like seeing one should pay one's fare on the bus, but able to sense and respond in complex novel situations, involving considerations from areas of different excellences (see *NE* 5.9, 1137a4–26); and hard too is the progression from an orientation around the goals of what the agent enjoys and disenjoys to a conception of the fine—involving evaluations of what is good and bad and wider contexts of life (compare 10.9, 1179b31–80a1).

4. *NE* 2.3: non-codifiability; the mean; excellences as enablers; roles of pleasure/pain; dimensions of agency

So our actions determine our states or dispositions (LSLA). Evidently the next question to ask is how our actions *need to be qualified* (2.2, 1103b26–31). Aristotle accepts the ubiquitous *'Correct Reason' principle*, that actions need to be done 'in accord with correct reason/account' (*kata ton orthon logon:* for example 3.7, 1115b12, 19), but puts off discussion of this, and of its relation to the other virtues, until later (1103b29–34: compare 6.12–13, 1144a6–1145a6, especially 1144b21–30). He then points out the difficulty of giving any very specific account with this sort of subject matter: as with health, it lacks 'fixity', and precision, both at the level of universals and even more so at the level of particulars and individual humans (1103b34–1104a7; compare 1094b11–27; 1098a26–9; 1097a11–13; 5.9, 1137a4–26; 10.9, 1180b13–20). There is no fully articulated art, or manual, here: the subject matter is in this way *uncodifiable*—at least it is *not wholly* capturable in a code, as literacy and spelling are (for example 3.3, 1112a34–b2).[46] We are faced instead with an ineliminable need for *situational appreciation* (Urmson 1973: 162; Wiggins 1975–6):

> SA: it is necessary for those who are at any point acting to consider the facts/needs of the occasion [*ta pros ton kairon*], as also holds in medicine and navigation. (1104a8–10)

(See 5.9, 1137a9–26, *Phaedrus* 268–9, esp.268b6–8.) Nonetheless, Aristotle feels bound to 'try to help' (1104a10–11). Here the discussion of 2.1–2 heads off in a new direction. (a) 1104a10–27: he first appeals to the idea that 'such matters are of their nature destroyed by excess and deficiency' as is evident from the clearer cases of fitness and health. Excesses and deficiencies of regimen and diet destroy them, while the appropriate (*summetra*) 'produce, increase, and maintain' them. So it is too, he suggests, with temperance, courage, and the rest—run away from *everything*, you'll become a coward, fear *nothing* and rush in, you'll become rash: what is needed is situational adjustment and appropriateness. This is the first, crudely characterized, entry of talk of the 'mean, excess, and deficiency' (see Broadie 1991: 97–8, for a different view). (b) 27–b3: moreover, as with fitness, the activities are *self-enhancing*, in that they produce a condition or state that itself renders one better (or worse) able to do those very same activities: lift weights and you will become strong and thus even more able to lift weights—so too with the excellences of character (compare *EE* 2.11, 1220a22–6).[47] This needs emphasizing. It is easy to forget 1.7, 1098a5–7 and then misread the claim that correctly qualified actions are needed for correctly qualified states as implying that our ultimate aim or end is to acquire those states, that is, to become good people (Sorabji 1973–4: 203): but we need to become good people only so that we can live and act successfully, *realize* these excellences in action and life: *eupraxia* is our end, not *euexia*. (c) b3–8: One can do, say, a temperate act out of fear of punishment: so what shows one has acquired the disposition so to act, viz. temperance? A mark of this is the pleasure and pain the person has in acting as they do: 'one who abstains from bodily pleasure and enjoys this very fact is temperate, one who is put out is intemperate' (compare 4.1, 1120a26–7).[48]

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[46] Note that this is consistent with some need for codifiability, even if it is incomplete: see further the discussion under section 4 below.

To explain this last point Aristotle is led to argue at length that characterological excellence in fact has pleasure and pain—likes and dislikes, enjoyment and disenjoyment—as its subject matter (2.3, 1104b8–05a13; 7.11.1152b4–6; *EE* 2.10, 1227b5–11; etc.). For they are bound into emotions and actions (1104b13–16; 1105a3–5; 1105a21–3; 1175a29–30; *EE* 2.3, 1220b12–14; 2.4, 1221b36–7) which are more obviously the subject matter of the excellences. So, in being habituated in our actions and emotions—to act and react in certain ways—we are being habituated in our likes and dislikes, in what we enjoy and disenjoy doing and feeling (*Rhet.* 1.11, 1369b33–70a14).[49] What we enjoy and disenjoy doing and feeling is our first, *prevaluational*, dimension of agency—we pursue what we like and avoid what we don't, right from our earliest days (1105a1–3). From our high chair we throw the nasty greens across the room, and cram the éclairs into our mouth. We can be misled by our likes and dislikes (because we enjoy éclairs we eat too many and are sick) (1104b9–13; 34)—they can be powerful and hard to resist (1105a7–13). So it is *crucial* to be brought up to enjoy and disenjoy—like and dislike—the things one should right from the get-go, and avoid being misled by wrong likes and dislikes: *that* is correct upbringing (*orthē paideia*: 1104b13; 10.9, 1179b24–6; *Pol.* 8.5, 1339a24–5; 1340a15; *Laws* 644a; 653a1, etc.). Being brought to enjoy and disenjoy what one should occurs before one is able to appreciate that one is enjoying, and disenjoying, *what one should.* As Plato says:

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[47] Of the three points mentioned in the summary at *NE* 2.3, 1105a13–16, the third refers to (b), and the second, I think, to (a), although perhaps also to *NE* 2.1, 1103b6–22.

[48] By 'one who abstains'. I take Aristotle to be using a grammatically 'habitual' present tense, describing a person's regular practice and reaction, not a one-off.

[49] For example 'Bouts of application, study, and intense effort are painful; for these involve necessity and force if they have not been habituated; thus it is that habit makes a thing pleasant' (*Rhet.* 1.13, 1370a12–14; 10.9, 1179b31–80a1). By being made to do things we get to enjoy doing them, sometimes at least, coming to appreciate their point, or even, in the case of the greens, their taste.

> I say then that among children their first childish perception is pleasure and pain, and these are the things in which excellence and defect first come aboard the soul.[50] ... So I call 'upbringing' [*paideia*] the excellence that first comes to children: so pleasure and love and pain and hatred would be instilled correctly in souls of those not able yet to grasp the reason—although when they have grasped the reason, then they [pleasure etc] will harmonize with the reason, that they were habituated correctly by the appropriate habits—and while it is this overall harmony that is excellence, yet the element in it of having been correctly brought up about pleasures and pains so as to hate what one should hate from start to finish, and to love what one should love, if one were to excerpt this in one's account and call *it* 'upbringing', that would be a correct call in my view. (*Laws* 653a5–c4; see *Rep.* 401e–402a)

Such upbringing is a delicate matter: it concerns not simply *what* we are to enjoy or disenjoy, for there are many other *aspects* to situations—and to pleasures and pains—to which children need to become sensitized and their responses appropriately shaped and moulded:

> people become bad through pleasures and pains, by pursuing and avoiding *the ones* they should not, or *when* they should not, or *in the manner* they should not, or in any of the other ways such things are determined by reason. (1104b18–28)

(This is the *category* or aspectual cashing out of the SA: compare Lawrence 2009).

Pleasure and pain—our likes and dislikes—come in not only as *the target* of habituation (whether for habituation to induce, or already there for it to mould or reinforce), but also as *tools* for inculcating these habits of what, when, and how (and so on) to enjoy and disenjoy, via bribes, threats and, chastisements (1104b16–18; *Top.* 1.11, 105a5–7).[51] Nor is their role simple even here. There are cases where reward and punishment are clearly extrinsic, or devices of association (the prospect of one already pleasant, or painful, activity being used to give a consequential setting, or else an aura, to another). But when does a responsive smile and hug cease to be extrinsic reward (if it ever was) for some act, and become, and be seen as, the expression of gratitude, a gratitude that is, say, the proper or fitting response to an adult version of the act, and which now, in this time of essay, gives shape to the very action that the child is in process of adding to its repertoire—as part of the surround, of what is picked out in the before-now-and-after, constituting the proper mould or form of the action, along with the other feelings and expectations that properly belong to it?[52]

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[50] '*paragignesthai*' is a *mot juste* for the acquisition of excellence (LSJ *sv.*): why is still obscure to me.

[51] Are they the only tools or methods of inculcation? Think of teaching games and a physically guiding hand (Anscombe 1978: 100–1), and music (the paideutic effects of music and its different modes is a large ancient topic: *Rep.* 401d; 522a; *Laws* 653–57; *Pol.* 8.5–7, for example 1339a21–5; 1342a28ff): children are naturally disposed to imitate and respond to melody and rhythm (*Poet.* 4, 1448b4ff; 20ff.). But are all these, at a formal level, matters of pain and pleasure, of what children like to imitate, etc.?

The role of pleasure and pain in habituation is thus complex (Burnyeat makes it the key, 1980: 74–80);[53] and they are themselves notoriously hard topics. Roughly, (a) don't think of them as naming sensations, but translate pleasure and pain locutions into ones of enjoyment/disenjoyment (or of like/dislike). These verbs require some further verb to modify: to enjoy éclairs is to enjoy, or to like, *eating* them; to disenjoy bright lights is to disenjoy, or to dislike, *seeing*, or looking at them (one may wonder whether for example all physical pain is amenable to being so construed, with verbs of proprio-perception). So (b) to say that one enjoys/likes, or disenjoys/dislikes, some activity is at least to say something about the role that activity plays—the place it occupies—in one's life. (c) Aristotle suggests that pleasure or enjoyment 'perfects' an activity, like their prime does to adults (1174b31–3, etc.), which we may tentatively interpret as involving coming to appreciate an activity *for what it is*, and revealing it, *qua* enjoyed, as something pursued *for itself* by the agent, as an end (for example to enjoy watching the movie is to watch it for its own sake, to enjoy a temperate act is to do it for its own sake, as an end (see 2.3, 1104b3–8, above; 2.4, 1105a31–2). But while pursued for itself, the end need not necessarily be a valued end, an end thought good to pursue by the agent: the akratic enjoys eating the forbidden éclair, as something for itself, but thinks he should not be pursuing this end, that it is not good, or valuable, but the reverse.[54]

Now what we enjoy and disenjoy doing is just one, albeit a basic, dimension of agency:

> there are three things with a view to takings [*haireseis*] and three with a view to avoidances [*phugai*], noble, advantageous, pleasant, and their opposites, base, harmful, painful—and about all these the good person is apt to be correct and the bad apt to go wrong, and most of all about pleasure: for this is both common to animals and accompanies all dimensions of taking: for the noble and the advantageous appear pleasant. (2.3, 1104b30–5)

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[52] Association too need not be taken on the crude model of mind-grooving—channelling the attention down an incline from one idea to another—but as the bringing on board, the induction into a practice.

[53] For criticism see Broadie (1991: 112n46); compare *Rhet.* 1.13.

[54] On such a view of enjoyment it is not surprising that processes as such cannot be enjoyed, for conceptually they cannot be ends. See further Gosling and Taylor (1982: ch. 13).

That the other dimensions, or grounds, of taking should appear pleasant is not surprising if liking or enjoying something involves taking it as an end. The advantageous (*to sumpheron*) is a difficult notion and requires a paper to itself.[55] The fine (the noble, the beautiful: *to kalon*) is clearly, along with the pleasant, a final dimension of agency (3.4, 1113a31, etc. *Rhet.* 1.9, 1366a33–6). Doing things *because they are fine* (or because not doing so would be *base*) is a ground, or end, of action, and one not available to animals: an end held of value by the agent. Indeed it turns out to be *the* end of action and feeling in the full characterological excellences (for example 1115b10–13; b23–4; 1117a8, a17, b9; 1119b15–16; 1120a23–7/31; 1122b6–7/10; 1126b28–9; etc.). Yes, the agent also *enjoys* doing and feeling what they take to be fine, but the enjoyment is in its fineness: its being fine is ground enough for doing it, and one's enjoying it for that itself marks this fact—that the fine is an end for one (see 1120a26–7; 1104b3–8).[56]

Habituation, in inculcating the human excellences, aims to bring us to enjoy and disenjoy the things we *should*, and this is a matter of coming to enjoy doing the fine and hating the base, *because* they are such. And so the primitive pleasure/pain dimension of agency in all our emotions and interests—of acting and reacting simply because we like, or dislike, something—is, ideally, transformed into a capacity to act and react so from a sense, or conception, of what act and reaction is fine and fitting to the occasion, is called for the situation as what one *should* do, and so in a sense completes or perfects the situation (see *EE* 8.3, 1248b36–7; 1.12, 1101b32).

Aristotle talks of the fine as something that can be misconceived. How it is conceived is a function of one's full character—of one's dispositions for choice as to what one takes to be doing well, or a fine way to conduct one's life. A bad character will misconceive this (3.4, 1113a25–b2, esp.31; see 2.3, 1104b32–4). Aristotle also talks of the fine where this is the *truly* fine, and of this only the good have a taste and correct conception (1179b15–16) (see the double use of 'answer').

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[55] A central question is whether (A) it (and its opposite, the harmful, *blaberon*) is simply instrumental (as comparison with '*chrēsimon*' in the tripartite distinction at 8.2, 1155b18–21 might suggest); or whether (B) it is also, at least in part, final, having to do with the agent's own personal welfare or self-interest: an early version of what would in the next generation or two be more clearly distinguished as 'the prudential', in that long, and unfortunate, distinction from the 'moral' (*utile* and *honestum*). There is, I take it, a line of connection between (A) and (B) whereby the advantageous becomes restricted to advantageous to self *as against others*—and the contrast between self and others becomes dominant and pushes out the question of whether what is advantageous is so by being constitutive of the agent's self-interest or instrumental to it.

[56] The connection needs further investigation: presumably one can't take something as fine to do without enjoying doing it (or being pained if one were not to do it—see 1104b7–8), but why exactly?

But what sort of end, or ground, is the fine? This is complex and Aristotle is indebted to his philosophical past.[57] Crudely, I take the contrast between doing something merely because one likes it, and doing it because one supposes it fine, to be one between taking something as an end, and taking it as a *valued* end—as the thing one *should* be pursuing, should *unconditionally*, in full practical rationality: that is, should if one is to be doing well or conducting one's life as is best. Animals are incapable of this. All too briefly, we may point to the following aspects of the fine.

(a) It extends to realms beyond agency. Aristotle remarks in *Meta.* 14.3, 1078a33–b3:

> Of the fine the most important forms are order (*taxis*) and symmetry (*summetria*) and the determinate (*to horismenon*), which the mathematical disciplines most evince.

To find something fine is to appreciate or perceive an order, a proper arrangement of things (*EE* 1.8, 1218a15–24). This can be found in unchanging things, both in the formal elegance of mathematics and in Aristotle's theistic metaphysics and in nature (see *EE* 1218b4–6; *PA* 1.5, 645a15–27), where the natural teleological structure of one thing *for the sake of* another is among the forms of fine. There is an aesthetic dimension to this (see also Hume, *Treatise* 3.3.1; Mill, *System of Logic* 6.12.6). It comes into music—in rhythm and harmony (for example *Laws* 664e–665)—and is connected then with the role of music in education. There is also here an aspect of proper magnitude and proportion as well as of order: *Poet.* 1450b34–51a15.

(b) In the realm of human passion and action, the sense of the fine becomes the sense of the proper ordering of a life: that an action is ordered to, or proper or fitting to, the situation, looked at from the widest context or perspective (i.e. of constituting a life properly lived). We can think of a situation as meriting—as calling for or giving opportunity for—some response, action, or feeling, that would in a sense *complete* or *perfect* it, that brings a proper or fitting *order* to it, as someone saying 'thank you' properly when presented with a gift—thus producing, in a small way, something fine, beautiful, and admirable, lacking which the situation would be incomplete, be it unfulfilled, marred, or even ugly.[58]

This aspect of acquiring a sense of the fine—as detecting the need for, and achieving, order, as completing or perfecting—is related to the notion of following a rule (to entering the world of 'natural unintelligibility'). Take Anscombe's example of the children's game:

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[57] For some Platonic background, Pakaluk (2005: 154–6); Broadie (1993: 92–5); for a rather different account, Cooper (1996a). See also Allan (1971); Irwin (1985a); Rogers (1993); Lear (2006).

[58] And, as with the example of giving gifts, there is room, and need, for imaginative creativity in developing responses to situations, whether of action or feeling (consider: speech). One might see the fine arts rather as special extensions of this more basic creativity and sensitivity—the practical embeddedness, for example, of lullabies, work songs, and keening, in human life, of such and other uses of the human voice—as imaginative responses preceding anything more separately 'aesthetic'.

> Think of the game played with very small children where several players pile their hands on top of one another. Then, if one of them doesn't pull his hand out from the bottom, you say 'You have to put your hand on top'; if he pulls it out too soon you say 'No, you can't pull it out yet, so-and-so has to pull his out first'. 'You have to' and 'you can't' are at first words used by one who is making you do something (or preventing you), and they quickly become themselves instruments of getting and preventing action. (Anscombe 1981b: 101)

Anscombe has a particular interest in forcing and stopping modals—but the imperative mood is just another such instrument: do's and don'ts; 'say "please"', and so on. An experienced repetition becomes understood as a rule (a 'law', a *nomos*/custom: a practice, a *way* of doing things or going on, in the sense of a rule-governed practice). In learning to play the game, the child comes to see something as *called for* by the situation—as needing, or meriting, or demanding, this or that contribution on its part to complete or perfect it (or that stage of it). A rule is a kind of *principle of order or pattern*—of *same again*. We have here moved away from a simple response of feeling thirsty and reaching for water to something of a different order.

In looking for the fine, one looks for a proper arrangement and attainment of human goods, of a life making sense and having *a proper shape*, not disfigured by ugly actions. This sense of a life as a life-time, something calling for a proper harmonious ordering of elements is not available to animals. In short, to find actions and emotions fine is to appreciate their place and appropriateness in the order of a life attuned to the situations in which it is lived; and this demands the perspective of one faced with a life to live and potentially to order, as open to, and rationally demanding, choice (both as to specification and to alternatives).

(c) The fine links with what is held admirable, deserving of praise or encomium (see 1.12, 1101b31–4; *Rhet.* 1366a33–6; see *Laws* 655d5–656a5); with having a sense of *shame* at doing the base, rather than merely a sense of *fear* (see 10.9, 1179b7–16, esp.11–13; 4.9; see *Top.* 4.5, 126a8–10). Tied with this is a sense of *self*, and of self in relation to others; of respect for self and others, and of celebration and pity—of what is proper for one to do, and properly owed or due one, with having, or aspiring to, a certain *standing*, where these ideals of a rational social animal take on more determinate expressions in particular cultural-historical contexts. This suggests the possibility of a special connection with *thumos*, *pride*, in the genesis of any conception of the *kalon* (see Burnyeat 1980: 79–80; also Cooper 1996a: 109–14). But equally, coming to like and immediately enjoy certain things—even starting with the *physical appetites*—naturally develops into a sense that they have *a place* in one's life, or with dislikes, a resistance to their having a place; one looks—hopes or expects—to have more now, or tomorrow, and fears their disappearance and absence; and this burgeoning awareness that one's immediate living could take the one shape or the other builds into the possibility of doing something about it (appetite is *epiboulos*, 1149b14–18). This naturally invites calculation, of living not being just one damn thing *after* another, but of doing one thing *in order to* produce another (screaming till more is forthcoming), and this too affords a sense of bringing order or structure to one's life, in the immediate to begin with, but with rapidly expanding horizons (see Broadie 1991: 106–8). And again, situations of apparently competing appetites, or desires more generally, invite the development of rational preference, of choice, and of calculation about the possibilities of so arranging and scheduling things that both can be satisfied. So there are roots even here for the idea of a life taking a shape, of its taking on an *order*, of a sense of its going well or badly, successfully or frustratingly—of its going, or not going, as it *should*.

5. The objection of *NE* 2.4 and the conditions on excellence of character

In *NE* 2.4, Aristotle addresses a problem-puzzle for his habituation account of virtue acquisition—that surely someone who *does* what is just or temperate is *already* (*ēdē*) just or temperate, *much as* someone who does something literate must already be literate.[59] That is, (1) as regards an excellence of character (V), the doing of a V act *suffices* to show the agent already to possess the V disposition or state (*hexis*), and (2) this is confirmed by the supposedly even clearer parallel of a skill or expertise (T, *technē*), where a T act surely *suffices* to show the agent already to possess the T skill (or capacity, *dunamis*). If so, one can't *acquire* a V or T *by* V-ing or T-ing. There isn't the needed gap, the logical room, between act and disposition or capacity for habituation or practice *even to be a candidate* for mode of acquisition, let alone the correct account.[60]

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[59] For simplicity I assume '*ēdē*' is a temporal 'already'; if we understood it as 'thereby' this would allow the possibility also of a *reductive* puzzle: that all there is to a skill/capacity or disposition is the doing of an act (see the Megarian claims of *Meta.* 9.3). The possibility that by doing a single V or T act one might acquire the skill or disposition would be a limiting case of Aristotle's position: one would not be exhibiting one's skill or disposition in that single performance, but acquiring it. (Perhaps this might be possible for example in learning to ride a bicycle, but not intelligible with the kind of skills and dispositions Aristotle is here concerned with.)

[60] Aristotle is not interested *here* even in characterizing, let alone unlocking, the puzzler's 'logical' problem, but only in using the occasion of the puzzle to cash out the nature of the gaps between mere V/T action and acts done from Vs and Ts, by giving further conditions on possessing a skill or an excellence of character beyond merely doing a T or V act. However, in *Meta.* 9.8, 1049b29–50a3, Aristotle details a 'sophistic' argument against the possibility of learning to ϕ by ϕ-ing, which is perhaps the widest version, or lowest common denominator, of the present puzzle (concerning the single common, knowledge, condition). As a *learner* the person can't *already* know how to ϕ—that is *what* they are about to learn or acquire; but if they are learning to ϕ by *ϕ-ing* then they must already know how to ϕ. It must then be both that they cannot already ϕ, and that they can.

The puzzle in *Meta.* 9.8 is powered by the apparent truism of '*knowledge necessity*': *A ϕ's → A* already knows how to ϕ'.

Against such a challenge, and to put habituation back on the table, Aristotle must make out the requisite *gap*. His response has the form: 'The problematic claim is not true for skills; and *a fortiori* not for excellences of character—for while they are indeed parallel (see 2.1, 1103a32–b2; b6–14; 2.3, 1104a13–19; 29–33), they are so only up to a point, and it is erroneous to conceive of excellences of character simply as skills (as shown by Plato).' The replies turn

(T1) 'Either you already know how to ϕ and so can ϕ; or you don't know how, and so can't ϕ' (see Wittgenstein 1953: §352 on the potentially misleading force of the law of the excluded middle).

So either way you can't come to know how to ϕ by ϕ'ing. Clearly one can counter this inference from (T1) by questioning both 'knowing' and its location, 'you'. (1) Couldn't you ϕ although not from knowledge, but, for example, by informed guesswork (success in the outcome suggesting you were on the right tracks)?; (2) Couldn't you ϕ from knowledge, but not from knowledge in you but from following the instructions of your knowledgeable teacher? (see main text).

By contrast, the puzzle in *NE* 2.4, seems powered by a wider apparent truism of 'act sufficiency: A ϕ's→A can ϕ':

(T2) [A] 'If A ϕ's—in the sense of 'does a single act of ϕ-ing'—doesn't this suffice to show that A can already ϕ, that A already has the ability or power to ϕ? (or that A is disposed to ϕ?)'

The tendency is to take this as a metaphysical insight, whereas, if anything, it is rather an attempt at a grammatical observation, instruction, or stipulation, to the effect that: 'where we can say 'A ϕ's' we do/should/will henceforth, with right, or correctly, say also 'A can ϕ' (or 'A is disposed to ϕ'). Such a rule of language for 'can' or 'is able' characterizes a possible sense of 'can/ability' but doesn't thereby guarantee that there actually is any such usage, nor say what its point is—or would be, if it is introducing such a usage: as yet it lacks any traction/contrast. It doesn't describe a game, or deployment, that might give meaning and point to a concept so governed: as yet it is mere extra idle cog. (Compare: 'If A ϕ's—in the sense of 'does a single act of ϕ-ing'—doesn't this suffice to show that A *is trying to* ϕ?' This again is not *per se* some metaphysical insight into the nature of actions as *au fond* 'tryings': but a grammatical instruction for deploying 'is trying', and one that leaves it as yet unexplained what point such a deployment of 'trying' would have. It looks on the surface to be idle, a mere '*philosophical* use', smacking of an empty, tractionless, universality: as if the aura of its meaning travelled with it from its real homes to our *ab-stract* ['ripping out]' philosophical deployment.)

There is nothing wrong in there possibly being such a usage. Yet equally one can claim:

[B] 'If A ϕ's—in the sense of 'does a single act of ϕ-ing'—this does *not* show that A *can* already ϕ, nor that A has the ability or power to ϕ (nor that A is disposed to ϕ)'.

As such this is just another rule for another possible usage—observational, stipulative, whatever—and one that conversely blocks the inference from the one locution to the other; and equally it does not describe the point of such a narrower usage. There is nothing immediately wrong about this possible usage either. It just needs to be given a point, a game to play. Now Aristotle's interest in *NE* 2.4, is in a still narrower, or more specific, claim:

[C] 'If A ϕ's—in the sense of 'does a single act of ϕ-ing'—this does not show that A can already ϕ in the sense of has the *skill*, the *technē*, of ϕ'-ing, nor that A has the *character excellence*, the *aretē*, of ϕ-ing, where this is a description of actions under a virtue description (for example doing a temperate action)'.

A *technē* is not a mere ability but *a systematic body of knowledge or know how*, something that couldn't conceivably be humanly acquired *instanter*; and a character excellence is something more than a skill (see for example *Republic* 1's worries over the Socratic skill model for excellences of character). This narrower version is precisely what Aristotle cashes out. In telling us *what* blocks the 'A ϕ's'/'A can already ϕ or is already disposed to ϕ' inference in the case of possessing a skill or excellence of character, he articulates the *traction* of the point(s) at issue in the inference block: i.e. the criteria governing our use of these concepts, the games we are playing with them (see further main text).

on showing that to count as having a *technē* or *arete* a person must (i) not only do the T or V act but (ii) do it technical-*ly* or excellent-*ly*, that is *in the manner* for example of the literate or temperate person; and that it is in such manners that (A) the gap appears between *merely doing* a T/V act and doing it *from* skill or *from* excellence, and also (B) the further difference between doing an act *from skill* and doing one *from excellence of character.*

Now Aristotle aims not merely to secure logical space for his candidate, but to claim its truth.[61] This latter he does, but in a way that, as shall see, creates a second unacknowledged, puzzle. However first let us consider his response to the puzzle he himself poses.

With *skills*, you do not count as literate—*able*, in this sense, to spell—if you spell 'necessary' correctly (a) by accident, or (b) under someone else's knowledgeable instruction. These two cases bring out different, incremental, points: (a) if the student spells it aright by *accident*, then writing the word is *in accord with* grammatical knowledge (*kata*), but not directed by, or exhibiting—not with (*meta*) or from—that knowledge (the skill to spell aright);[62] (b) if the student spells it aright *under instruction*, then the writing not merely accords with, but exhibits or manifests, the skill or expertise to spell aright—is done *with* knowledge—but the expertise is 'in' (*en*) the teacher, not in the student (as would be shown by a certain kind of mistake: if the student correctly followed the teacher's instructions, it is the teacher's ignorance that is at fault, not the student's). So you will only count as yourself literate, or as acting literately, (i) if your literate act is not merely *in accord with*, but flows *from* knowledge of literacy, and (ii) flows from this knowledge that *you yourself possess*. This knowledge, or expertise, condition, (C1), is a conceptual condition on the attribution of a skill to someone. And it manifests a gap between merely doing a literate act on the one hand and being literate and doing it literate-ly on the other, viz. doing it *knowledgeably*: a gap that is needed if it is to be an intelligible suggestion that one acquires the latter by doing, or being trained to do, the former.[63]

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[61] Such a gap is *necessary* if habituation is to be even a candidate. But is demonstrating the gap *sufficient* to establish habituation as *the* candidate of T/V acquisition, or at least as the core element in its acquisition? Aristotle may think it sufficient, given the arguments of *NE* 2.1 for habituation winning out over teaching and nature, and think the only remaining problem is a logical one of its very coherence, that he is now addressing.

[62] I used to worry about the case of accident or chance not even counting as a grammatical act. However, there are many different cases here. (A) There is an illiterate (or monkey) doodling with a pencil or piece of charcoal, whether as yet personally unacquainted with the practice of writing in their community, or in a culture that as yet lacks the practice of writing. This is not even a grammatical act, let alone correct: they neither spell nor misspell the word. They are *not writing, nor spelling, neither correctly nor incorrectly.* (B) But then there is also the *in-class spelling test*, where a child, who already knows his letters and is conversant with the idea of writing, of spelling and misspelling, is asked to spell 'necessary', and gets it right, although he lacks this particular knowledge. It may be luck—a stab in the dark—or guesswork (the child explores and is guided by his sense of the word rolled on the tongue and plumps for one 'c' and two 's'). In fact the child need not even have been trying to get it correct—he may be indifferent, simply producing some answer to avoid being kept in after school—or even trying to give a wrong answer, in order to be kept in after school and not have to go home. But, importantly, he is writing intentionally, and so by accident may write what is correct. The 'accident' in question attaches to the grammatical act's being correct, not to its being a grammatical act (there could be gray cases). ('Grammatical act' is ambiguous between one that may be assessed for correctness, and one that is equivalent to correctly grammatical, so of which you couldn't ask 'is it correct?') (Similarly one may worry about what sort of case of doing what is just *'di'agnōian'* Aristotle has in mind in 6.12, 1144a13–20. Further complexities emerge in connecting this with 5.9, 1137a4–26, esp. a9–12, 21–6.)

The condition seems somewhat under-described. For your spelling to be done literate-ly it has to be guided or governed by your possession of the relevant knowledge.

(A) Is the knowledge at issue here—of what is grammatical or musical—(i) knowledge of criteria of success in the product, of what a good X is? or (ii) of that and *also* what goes into making one (the recipe; the manual: that you do this first, then that..., i.e. of how to produce the product). Or is it also (iii) the ability to realize that knowledge, or, as an *architekton*, have it realized? How does a skill so conceived contrast with geometry? And given the general connection between knowledge and teachability (*didaxis*), why isn't this a matter of teaching as against habituation? Why isn't the case of 'another's instructing' (*hupothemenou*) precisely a case of teaching? Or is it? (see note 21; and p. 266) (B) How articulate is the knowledge at issue? Elsewhere Aristotle distinguishes between full possession of skill, where the technist has the relevant universals, and thus knows *the whys* as well as *the thats* of what he does, from an 'expertise'—where through eperience the producer knows *the that's* but only those. yet both can produce the goods. Again elsewhere he distinguishes between skills that are more precise and articulated—where there is no room for doubt and deliberation as to how it will turn out ('will 'necessary' have one 'c' and two 's' the next time I write it?')—and skills where there is such room, by the very nature of their subject-matter (e.g. medicine and navigation). In the latter there is an ineliminable rôle for experience, beyond what is capturable in universal truths (do these further truths then lack explanation? Or have it only in terms of their 'deviation' from the relevant universal? etc.).

This knowledge condition, (C1), holds also for possession of *the excellences of character*: you count as temperate or just only if you do what is so, not by accident, but from knowledge that it is temperate or just, knowledge that you yourself possess. But this condition, so far from being the sole condition as in skills, 'has no or little import' in excellences (1105b2–3). To count as acting justly, i.e. from the possession of the virtue, you must also satisfy two further conditions as agent: (C2) you need to *choose* the action, and choose it *for its own sake*; (C3) and to be acting from a condition that is firm, and hard—or impossible—to change or sway (*bebaiōs kai ametakinetōs*).[64]

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[63] Aristotle's target is limited. He can allow (i) that getting it right by accident or under instruction may be compatible with the possession of a skill (for example the informed hunch; the master class); (ii) getting it right is not necessary to the possession of the skill, possession of which allows a variety of mischances, mishaps, and mistakes: recouping, mitigating, or learning from a mistake, etc. (compare for example Plato *Rep*. 2.361a5–b5 in a characterization of perfect *adikia*).

The plausibility and rationale for these conditions is most easily considered by asking what they exclude.

C1. The knowledge condition holds in the case of excellences of character presumably at least for the reasons given in the skills. Someone doesn't count as already virtuous merely if he or she does a virtuous act by accident[65] or at the instigation and instruction of another—the child who is told to say 'thank you' or that 'it is polite to say "thank you"—or 'just to give back the borrowed toy' and does so, perhaps nicely, is 'polite', or 'just' only in expectation. To be acting virtuous-ly—for example justly or temperately—one must have, and be acting on, such knowledge possessed by oneself.[66]

However this condition 'has no, or little, sway in excellences' (1105b2–3). Why? Skills are virtually constituted by the knowledge condition (that is what they are—organized bodies of knowledge): the relevant knowledge is all you need to be in a position to produce skillful-ly and successfully. Not so with excellences of character. Knowing what is, and what is not, temperate or just, you might do it but not temperate-ly or justl-ly: for you might do it on a whim (or akratically, against your own values), or merely to impress another, or to increase your income by fostering a reputation for honesty—for 'money or vainglory' as Aquinas suggests (*Summa Theologiae* 1a2ae, 19, 7 and 2); or out of fear of punishment (see 6.12, 1144a13–17; 10.9, 1179b10–16); and again the unjust may well know their rights and what it is just to demand of others, without seeing any value in treating others the same way;[67] and equally you would be armed with knowledge of what it would be unjust to do (see 5.9, 1137a17–26; 6.5, 1140b22–4).[68] The idea then is that the knowledge condition in excellences doesn't have the kind of centrality it does in skills. With skills it is *the* condition that separates the skilled from the unskilled; but in the case of excellences, the relevant knowledge, while necessary, is not sufficient for possession of the excellence. You can do a temperate act and from your knowing it to be so, and yet not do it temperate-ly; and it seems that this condition *can* be satisfied even by the intemperate and unjust, and so on.[69]

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[64] On the difference between the cases of skills and excellences of character, Aristotle says: 'for things that come about by (*hupo*) the skills have their success in themselves—it suffices then that these come to be in a certain condition', whereas things that come about in accord with (*kata*) the excellences need the agent to be in a certain condition if they are to be done just-ly or temperate-ly. Initially this is puzzling, since even with products the producer must be in a certain condition (one of knowledge) if they are to be produced *skillful*-ly. Yes but still the upshot of a techne—the product—can be a *successful* one even if it was produced by guesswork or under instruction, so long as it performs its function properly. Whereas for the upshot of an excellence of character—a Praxis—to be successful, this requires the agent to be in a certain condition: to be successful the action must be expressing of the agent's own knowledge, and even more so their values, and these values need to be correct, and firmly adhered to: for success in a Praxis is the correct realization of the human being qua human.

[65] Again there is a question of the nature of accident at issue. Tripping so that you end up pushing someone else out of the way of a bullet and thus save his life—and perhaps lose your own—as you get of the foxhole is not an act of courage or heroism (except by a very far accident, that it is what you would have chosen to do. But what is it that you might have chosen to do? To trip up by accident so that you fell into him? That's not a possible object of choice. So you would have chosen to do something, to put an act there, with same upshot that the accidental trip had). The accident currently at issue we may think is rather that of getting it correct about what is for example the kind or courageous thing to do here.

[66] This doesn't mean one cannot find some cases difficult, and seek and welcome advice, etc., (see 3.3, 1112b10–11): only if you found certain cases difficult or needed advice there, would it undermine the attribution of the relevant knowledge. Advising is different from training or instructing, although there can be occasions where they intermesh.

Isn't Aristotle here thinning down ethical knowledge? For one might rather think (with Socrates) that knowledge of temperance and justice would be or include knowledge of their goodness, of their value in human life, of goods and bads in their area, knowledge that would reveal their rationality and wisdom. Such knowledge would hardly be of little or no import. So I think he is offering the kind of thin conception above where the essential involvement of practical wisdom in a full excellence of character (and their unity) is to an extent being set aside (see 2.3, 1103b31–4). However, its role comes back in the second condition: this involves preferential choice which is essentially the upshot of practical reasoning, and where the agent's *valuation* of the action under the virtuous description is key. (The flattening of the knowledge condition is perhaps due in part to making it a lowest common denominator one, shared with skills.)[70]

Turning now to (C2), this is in effect a double condition. First, the action must be a matter of choice (*prohairesis*), that is, be valued by the agent, be viewed by him *as* what he should be doing, as what counts as acting successfully or finely, as *eupraxia*. It is not a merely voluntary action, done *kata pathos*, under the sway of the emotion of the moment: a gift to charity out of a sudden access of mere sentimentality doesn't show you to be acting kind-ly, namely, out of kindness. Second, choice is not enough, for the act may be chosen and chosen as just, yet chosen not for itself but for ulterior ends, for example as above, to increase your wealth. To be done excellent-ly the excellent action must be valued, or chosen, precisely *for itself—as* being itself the fine or noble way to act.

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[67] See Anscombe (1981b: 45): 'But people of the most horrible principles know quite well how to cry out against injustice and lying and treachery, say, when their enemies are guilty of them. So they in fact know quite a lot.' (See 1135b33 and Burnet 1900: 238)

[68] Aristotle seems to me here to run the risk of thinning down ethical knowledge: see below in main text, and consider the unity with practical wisdom, which is knowledge that is essentially evaluative and practical; knowledge of it that reveals its reason-givingness.

[69] A modal version of the condition might fare a bit better: the virtuous have to satisfy the knowledge condition, whereas the viciousness may but don't need to.

[70] One can understand why Burnyeat (1980) takes the central problem to be how practice can lead to knowledge (74–5; 76), but this is not apparently how Aristotle is approaching it at this point.

(C2) is intuitive, and central (see 6.2; 6.12–13). To act from an excellence then requires one to value the excellent action as such, and to value it for itself, as the fine way to live and go on—and clearly one might do an excellent action without valuing it (you just felt like it), or while valuing it, be doing so for the wrong reason (some ulterior motive).

What of (C3)? It rules out the unstable and easy to change. Over what exactly? Over character, choice, and values, I take it—that is, all those who have not yet reached their *dernière consistance*. Aristotle does not specify them. Presumably it includes (a) those who, like adolescents, are nice enough and on the right tracks, yet if they fell into bad company, or situations of temptation (see *Pol.* 7.15. 1334a23–39), could be seduced or corrupted; or those vulnerable to intimidation and manipulation, at home and at work (see the 'soft', 7.7, 1150b1ff; *Laws* 659a). This covers those we regard as bordering on *the merely respectable*, in the sense of those disposed to a certain form of behaviour without appreciating its correctness (see (c), (d) below). (b) The enkratic, who satisfies conditions (C1) and (C2), and yet is not fully virtuous, because tempted to go against their choice.[71] (c) Other forms of instability: the impulsive, distractable, light-minded; those 'playing' at being virtuous, out of respectability and so forth (see also 1.10, 1100b12–17; Ryle 1958).[72] (d) Perhaps even those who are experienced and practical in simply knowing *the that* but lack *the why*, and so are to an extent vulnerable (see *EE* 1.6, 1217a4–7) (see further below).

With these conditions, Aristotle makes conceptual room for his habituation claim.[73] But he solves one puzzle at the cost of emphasizing another. If these are the further conditions on possessing a V or T, then in coming to possess a V or T by habituation, it must be habituation that leads to *their* satisfaction—and so indeed Aristotle claims:

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[71] One may conceive of *enkrateia* as an essentially unstable state, in flux, either up to full virtue or down to *akrasia*; or as relatively stable, yet lacking the fixity of virtue—lacking its very unthink-ability of acting otherwise. (See also 7.8, 1151a14 on the akratic being '*eumetapeistos*'.) We should distinguish the unthinkability of doing some act from the unthinkability of coming to suppose one *should* do it. A relatively stable enkratic may have the latter but not the former: their *values* are not immediately under threat, only their ability to ward off courses of action they disapprove of, yet still find attracting and pulling. Insofar as someone finds actually doing the action unthinkable, this undermines the sense of their being really tempted and moves towards a merely wishful, and perhaps innocent, toying with the idea. (There is much room for sliding from one to the other. See note 14.)

[72] Aquinas in his commentary, operating from the Latin translation, takes the 'resolutely/ steadfastly' to be a matter of (internal?) consistency, and the 'stability' one of immunity to external pressure.

[73] Are there comparable conditions on vice of character? Hardly. The aspect of viciousness, although it can, in certain cases, be final or instrumental, is perhaps most often a matter of indifference, or inconvenience, to the agent in their *choice* of action. This difficult topic I pursue elsewhere.

but with regard to the excellences <of character> [as against the skills] the knowing is of no or little consequence; while the other conditions [i.e. C2 and C3] are of no small but total sway, which *come about from often doing just and temperate things.* (1105b2–5, my emphasis)

But *how* does habituation lead to the satisfaction of these conditions? Aristotle's endorsement of habituation against its rivals disguises the need for its considered investigation, and of the different kinds and aspects of training, practice, etc. (see p. 241–2 above; Broadie 1991: 103–10, esp. 104 and n37). There seems then something of a lacuna right at the heart of Aristotle's account. Admittedly he points to a rich array of elements—enjoyment and disenjoyment; discrimination; perception, experience; calculation, choice, and the fine—but seemingly leaves it largely to the reader to work out how they hang together. (For one version see Burnyeat 1980, criticized by Broadie 1991: 122n46.) He does not really make clear how he takes habituation to work, nor whether it itself involves further elements (see section 3 above). It may be a certain obvious bedrock fact (see 3.5, 1114a9–10), but one can still ask how repetition is supposed to lead to the satisfaction of these conditions. And perhaps this is *the* question.

There is a preliminary issue as to whether Aristotle supposes C1 actually to be a matter of habituation (see note 21). For it is not asserted in the passage quoted above, and it might be that the notion of coming to be a ϕ-er by ϕ-ing is wider than habituation and encompasses some forms at least of teaching—that *eth-ismos* is confined to the acquisition of *ethos*, and the skills are simply instances of the wider point. However, I shall suppose for the moment that all three conditions are matters of habituation. So how does it lead to their satisfaction? Some initial, inadequate, thoughts.

(C1) *Agent's own Knowledge.* How might habituation, or frequent doing, result in the agent's knowledge of the area (compare Burnyeat 1980: 76)? Among various connected avenues to explore are these.

(a) In acquiring a first language, one needs to distinguish the basic (forms of) training an infant undergoes from the subsequent possibilities of teaching: an infant cannot be taught or introduced to new words by other words, nor have its grammar descriptively corrected. So in attaining mastery in any, or most, areas, one might roughly distinguish two aspects, the initial inculcation of the basic frame whose acquisition then makes possible extension and refinement by experience and teaching. So here we may think of acquiring a basic vocabulary and repertoire of sensitivity, action and emotional response, and this is done by repetition, imitation, reinforcement, and so on.[74]

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[74] But how would for example mathematics differ from this? Doesn't Aristotle make a mistake in 2.1 by dividing intellectual and characterological excellences and then simplistically aligning them with a teaching-training distinction?—not just because the characterological excellences will be shown to be essentially involved with the intellect

(b) Habituation involves being brought to notice certain features of situations (like other people's needs), having one's attention drawn to them in a variety of settings, and then becoming accustomed to—in the habit of—being on the look out for and spotting them oneself. At some point being habituated segues into experience (*empeiria*) (see further p. 278 on their possible relation). We can think here of the inculcation of an *increasingly discriminating and imaginative sensitivity.* (Aristotle would appear to follow Plato in thinking of this as a training in ability or disposition to detect some universal whose presence one can be led to notice and track long before being able to articulate it: see *An. Po.* 2.19. Compare the view of rule as algorithm.) And it is not only noticing features of situations but of being led to make—and to observe in others—responses to these features (actions and feelings) that become sensed as appropriate and inappropriate: to sense *a connection of appropriateness*—in the joining together of perception or situational appreciation and response just as in the joining together of words in grammatical connection to make a sentence, and of the production of a sentence in a certain kind of situation or as a response to another sentence to make a conversation whole (not simply your sentence *after* my sentence). We could express this in two ways. We are led into an almost *aesthetic sense* of a situation and response making up a whole of beauty and order, or else as marred with ugliness. And herein (like also with the idea of one thing *in order for* another) is the germ of *a rational connection*: not just a response—a liking a disliking, a pursuit, a flight—but of a called for or merited response, of one thing being a reason for another (their pain a reason to remove your foot: that that is what you should do in this situation).

(c) Habituation may be thought of in terms of making an area, or practice, accustomed or *familiar* to the subject (*gnōrima*: see 1.4, 1095b2–6). The 'knowledge' in question is not a matter of occasional propositions, but rather mastery of a discipline, a systematic area or dimension of human expertise and understanding (say the dimension of social politeness). This takes time, and there is a certain holism involved, as in learning the steps of a dance. At first the agent may be brought to say, or do, some of the right things ('to string together the correct sentences', 7.3, 1147a21–3; 6.8, 1142a19–20), but only when a sufficient area is under their belt—has become assimilated (*sumphuenai*, 1147a22)—will we be tempted to suppose they have some mastery of their own and have some understanding of the meaning, the import, of its being *just* to return this book they have borrowed (or of the whole idea of *spelling* a word, rather than saying out loud, in parrot fashion, a certain sequence of letters, or sounds; or of the mastery of tenses, where surely 'light dawns gradually over the whole'). A central part at least of this is accustomization to the starting points (the *archai*),

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(something he will make much of) but, conversely, because human intellectual acquisitions are themselves so much a matter of training (and emotion). (Isn't he misled here by his rationalist view of god, of success in substance?)

the *thats*, in the area (1.4, 1095b2–6; 1.7, 1098b3–4; *Top*.1.11): *that* this is what is just to do here, and *that* is unjust there, and so on[75]—all this long before we come to understand, if we ever do, what it is about this, and that, that makes them just, that explains why (*dioti*) they are so. Having acquired the correct *thats* is a necessary condition of being in the position to ask for the *whys* of their truth: if you have been brought up badly, with the wrong *thats*, you are in no position to understand the truth of what is completely false.

(C3) *From a Stable and Hard to Change State.* It may seem obvious that habituation should effect this condition, C3. Isn't it just the root idea of habituation, that the constant repetition of acts—repetition perhaps externally initiated—ingrains habits, *sets* someone in their ways? And presumably if persisted in, the habits become second nature, hard, if not impossible, to change (so 7.10, 152a27–33; 3.5, 1114a9–10).[76]

But there seems something special to the case of excellence of character: after all we are not thinking here of a mere habit (stroking the chin), but of a rationally illuminated disposition of will, of one's capacity to value.[77] Aristotle seems correct to suppose it a condition on being fully virtuous that such values are not easily changed—that exclude the kind of cases mentioned above (p. 265). This suggests there is a more particular story to tell about the effects of habituation in the case of excellence of character. There are at least two aspects, cognitive and conative.

(a) *Conative* The thought here is that habituation gives the recipient strength of will ('backbone')—they learn to control their desires, especially appetites, and passions (fear, etc.), and to take away the pain of frustrated appetite and the tedium of study (see *NE* 1.3, 1095a4–11; *Rhet.* 1.13, 1370a12–14; *NE* 10.9, 1179b31–80a1): under guidance—of do's and don't's—one becomes empowered to control desires, to bring them into line with (*kata*) reason.

(b) *Cognitive* One can hold opinions very strongly as Aristotle acknowledges (7.3.1146b27–31). But there is something different in the strength and fixity of understanding. '*Episteme*' is a coming to a stop, a *stand-still*: *eph-istemai* (an etymology Aristotle explicitly plays with in *An. Po.* 2.19.100a3–b5). Taking *episteme* here to be a matter of understanding, of having *the why* as well as *the that* (for example *Meta.* A.1), the idea is that when one understands, one has come to a stop: enquiry is now ended, and the soul is stilled and settled, properly stable—not (so) capable of being misled or overturned by a false theory as when someone only has *the thats*. It is as if the translation had been 'at-standing' rather than 'under-standing' (and why 'under'-stand?). Now practical wisdom is distinct from *episteme* and from *technē* (see 6.5, 1140a33–b4), but in its full form involves knowledge of *why* as well as *that* and in a wider sense is a form of understanding (see. 6.7, 1141b12–23). And as a form of understanding it has *this* kind of stability. But it has a further form. For while *episteme* and *technē* can, I think, in Aristotle's view be forgotten, practical wisdom cannot (6.5, 1140b25–30; see 1.10, 1100b12–17): perhaps the akratic can temporarily 'forget himself', the virtuous person not.[78] And here too habituation, and perhaps as leading naturally on to experience—being shown what is the same again, and then coming to be able to see it for oneself (cf. section 6)—is, in giving one the correct *thats*, putting one in place to appreciate *the whys*.

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[75] Compare 'that this is what helped Socrates when he was ill like this' (*Meta.* 1.1, 981a8–9).

[76] Like the tendency to imitate, this seems a bedrock fact of (human) nature; that repetition creates forms, patterns or rules of action or feeling, of sensitivities, of expectations, and exclusions of possibilities, of structuring experience and of problem-solving, etc. There may be a temptation to think of this as inducing some rigidity, and interpret that in terms of some kind of 'automatic' unreflective response, one even of blinkerdom and blindness. And some habits are like that (driving home); and perhaps all habits often have such instances or aspects (saying 'please' and 'thank you'). Following a rule means you are excluding certain things as possibilities, but this kind of 'rigidity' doesn't have to be the automatic rigidity of a machine, and can be as contoured and sensitive to nuance/exploratory as you like.

[77] For example in the *Categories* Aristotle distinguishes between *diathesis* and *hexis*.

In short we may think of the conative and cognitive here as two sides of a stepladder. (1) There are aspects where in growing up one will be taught—trained—to be able to master one's desires, to resist temptation (and the feeling of shame has its proper place and role here: see NE 4.9, 1128b15–21): a kind of juvenile *enkrateia* may be thought a stage on the path to developing full virtue (1128b33–4). (2) Equally as one's experience widens and deepens one moves from accepting *that* one should do such and such to seeing and appreciating more of its point—of *why* it is correct so to go on. This deepening understanding starts to inform and mould the very shape of one's desires: so that one is tempted to say that in the fully virtuous these conative and cognitive aspects above are resolved, melded, into a unity: it is not simply that one's practical understanding has full 'control' of one's desires, so that the latter 'accord' with (*kata*) the former (1095a10) but rather that what one desires is now fully shaped by—and transparent to—one's practical understanding, and how one sees the world is informed by one's proper concerns. One's understanding of the situation precisely expresses itself in part by your wish to comfort them in their need, and so on (see '*meta logou*'). Here we are entering the territory of C2.

(C2) The Transition from Acting/Living Kata Pathos to Acting/Living Kata Prohairesin. From the perspective of this chapter, (C2) is the central condition: for we are taking the key aspect of human maturation to be the transition from *praxis* to *Praxis*, from mere action to prohairetic, or valued, action: action the agent takes as best, all things considered: that is, whose truth as being *eupraxia* is

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[78] Two questions. First, it would seem that Aristotle thinks that values are not forgotten: that 'understanding' is not dragged about like a slave (7.3, 1147b13–17). That when I weak-willedly have a glass of wine I should not, it is against my better judgement, my values. It hasn't changed them so that I think that is what I should do, or destroyed them—so that I would have to re-acquire them. At most it is a 'temporary forgetfulness'. So the lack of forgetfulness in one sense is not peculiar to practical wisdom. Second what of vice and false values? (Quite generally there is a question about whether the conditions in 2.4, on virtue are equally ones on full vice.)

maximally vulnerable to considerations of human good and bad, and not merely to some particular dimension or aspect. There are, as already noted, two parts to this condition: that the virtuous action be chosen, and chosen for its own sake: about the development and acquisition of some set of values which one then acts to realize, and the development and acquisition of the correct set. To say that this is achieved 'by often doing just and temperate things' is disingenuous.[79] Obviously Aristotle gives us more material, and we can distinguish elements of (i) being made to do some things and not others under threat of chastisement and praise (see for example 2.3, 1104b16–18; 3.1, 1109b30–5); (ii) being brought to want certain things and not others; (iii) being brought to take pleasure in—to like and dislike—some things and not others; (iv) to feel ashamed (and pride) in doing and not doing certain things—an emotion of social and self measure; (v) coming to see some actions as, and others as not, appropriate, or fitting, to the situation—as bringing order to it and making it a whole, perfecting it so that it is fine. I have in section 4 tried to bring out the importance of a sense of *widening context* within which the possibility, and challenge, of ordering behaviour and actions emerges, and of new kinds of behaviour and action, of setting ends for ourselves—leading eventually to the maximal context of one's whole life and taking full control and responsibility for our lives. And herein is the very central notion of taking one thing *in order for* another—the very root of *pro-hairesis*, although on my understanding Aristotle uses *prohairesis* for its maximal version (where the end one is acting for is *eupraxia*). But this whole second puzzle requires more discussion.

6. The stages of development

Even on Aristotle's own account, the *upshot* of 'habituation' seems ambiguous (see section 3 above). (1) *NE* 2.4 makes the broad claim that it results in the satisfaction of all three (or at least C2 and C3) conditions of excellence *proper* (see 2.1, 1103a25–6 *'teleioumenois'*). (2) Yet elsewhere Aristotle apparently envisages an intermediate result or stage—*habituated excellence* (*ethiste arete*), where this differs from both *natural* and *proper* excellence (see 7.8, 1151a15–19; Plato *Laws* 655; Sorabji 1973–4: 211–12). On this latter model, the achievement of habituation is *preparatory*, instilling a *proto-character*, on which experience, teaching, and reflection can then build and refine:

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[79] Compare Ariely again on 'anchoring'—transpose it from finance to a case of how to behave: the importance of dropping, or rather instilling, an initial 'anchor' for future behaviour and Aristotle's claim about the importance of getting actions qualified from the get-go; compare also self-herding' for the repetition element (2009: 37–8).

> Reason and teaching do not ever weigh among all, but it is necessary to have prepared beforehand *in its habits* the soul of the listener with regard to enjoying and hating finely—just as <one prepares> ground that is to receive seed. For the person who lives by passion would not listen to reason trying to dissuade, nor yet would they understand it... So it is necessary *for the character to be there beforehand in a way,* akin [*oikeion*] to excellence, loving the fine and loathing the base. (10.9, 1179b23–31;1180a5–8; *Rep.* 401e–402a; *Laws* 653a–c; 655; 718–22; *Protag.* 325a–b; see1095a2–11; *Pol.* 8.1, 1337a18–21; 8.3, 1338b4ff)

Habituation thus prepares the place for reason—first external, then internal—to get a hearing, and an effective one (see 1.3.1095a4–11, especially.10–11). One is habituated in one's likes and dislikes, to love the fine and loath the base (2.3, 1104b11–13). (*Love* and *hate* are, I suspect, taken to have a particular, or incipient, connection with holding things *fine* and *base*, rather than merely pleasurable or painful [see *Rep.* 402d].) This is material reason can work up and integrate into excellence proper, that is, wisdom-involving dispositions. In line with 10.9, 7.8.1151a15–19 claims 'excellence either natural or habituated', is, in contrast to reason, responsible for 'correct *opining*' about our ends/the end.[80] So this model envisages that, as with natural, so with habituated, excellence, a further stage is required to transform it into proper excellence: intelligence (*nous*), in the shape of practical wisdom must be added (see 6.13, 1144b8–14). That requires perceptive experience of life, and intellectual reflection on the particular actions one has been habituated to love as fine (see 6.11, 1143b2–5)—and will I take it yield understanding, not mere opining, about the correctness of the virtuous ends—however that understanding is conceived of.

Aristotle also distinguishes two aspects of practical wisdom (and skill): a knowledge of the relevant universals and familiarity with the relevant particulars. Practical wisdom and skill involve *both;* but it is possible to have only familiarity with the particulars, and this he calls *'expertise'* or experience (*empeiria*: compare 'what someone has tried') (6.7.1141b18; *Meta.* 1.1). Those with expertise know only the *thats*, while the fully wise, or skilled, understand also the relevant universals and thus know the *whys* (*NE* 6.7.1141b14–23; 1.4, 1095b6–8; 10.9, 1180b7–28; *Meta.* 1.1. 981a12–24; see *Meno* 97a–98d). But both are practical (by contrast with those who, if that is possible know only the universals).[81]

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[80] Commentators do not by and large remark on *'ethistē'*; if Aristotle simply meant full excellence here why didn't he for example use *'ethikē'* or *'kuria'*, and why only correct opinion?

[81] (i) 'Consequently it is necessary to attend to the undemonstrated assertions and opinions (*doxai*) of those with expertise and somewhat older [or practically wise] no less than to demonstrations: for because they have an eye from expertise they see correctly' (6.11, 1143b11–14).

On the excised clause Burnet (1900: 281) comments: 'These words are suspicious. The *phronimos* can always put his advice in syllogistic form.' If kept, it may suggest that Aristotle is prepared to call one with only practical expertise *'phronimos'*, but this doesn't seem the case elsewhere in *NE* 6.7 nor in *Meta.* 1.1, Perhaps originally it belonged in the line below: 'no less than the demonstrations <of the *phronimoi*>', restoring a parallel phraseology to the contrast.

Now one might ask: is mere *expertise* in the sphere of Praxis the same stage as habit-excellence? For isn't habituation a matter of guiding someone into experiencing something often, so that they have *the thats* (see 1.4, 1095b4–8; 1.7, 1098a33–b4)? Yet in *NE* 1.3, 1094b27–1095a11 Aristotle demands two prerequisites from his audience: (i) they need experience of life and its goings-on; (ii) they need to be able to control their desires and conform them to reason, and not live simply by the passion of the moment (*kata pathos*). I suspect that diachronically these come apart: that the latter, (ii), is a matter of early training—of liking and disliking as one should (see 10.9 quoted above), while the former, (i)—well, *that* is a matter of time and experience (see 6.8, 1142a14–16; Tinbergen 1960: 63–4). Experience of life in this sense is perhaps a matter of habituation become self-aware and self-guided (a matter of internalization). That is, *habituation* seems like an externally driven, or guided, transition (*agoge*), or 'induction' (*epagoge*), from one thing to a similar ('same again'); *experience* like one that is driven or guided internally by the agent now prepared and inclined to notice similarities—and differences—for themselves.[82] [B] One may think also that habit excellence, like natural excellence, is something that can be acquired and possessed one by one, or that it as yet lacks a full integration with other habit excellences—and that experience both enriches the local area and achieves a wider context, integrating the input from different areas and excellences.

In short: the *stages* of characterological development are, like habituation itself, somewhat unclear. A fuller consideration would look for example at *Meta.* 1.1 and *An. Po.* 2.19; at *Pol.* Books 7–8, and, to an extent, *Rhet.* 2.12–14; at the Platonic background, the ascent in the *Symposium*, the education programmes in Books 2–3 and 6–7, of the *Republic*, the stages of Sun, Line, and Cave, and the *Laws*. Working from a miniature palette, we can roughly distinguish, and characterize, the following *four* stages as ones with which Aristotle variously operates, sometimes contracting, sometimes expanding: [S1] Natural- or *Ur-character*; [S2] Habit- or *Proto-character*: habituated excellence and vice—inculcating the possibility of a different kind of motivation, where there is place and demand for the input of reason; [S3] *Experiential character*, [meeting the conditions of 2.4] knowing the *thats*, *without* having the *whys*; [S4] *Full character*: an adult who has the *whys* as the *thats*—who articulately understands,

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Alternatively Burnet suggests the word is 'used in its popular sense'; Gauthier and Jolif compare 1143a28, and certainly the whole chapter is complex (even the strictness of 'demonstration').

(ii) One with expertise also needs *paideia* (education), that is, sound discrimination as to what arguments and explanations are relevant and what not—and so protected again being bamboozled by charlatans (see *EE* 1.6; *NE* 1.3; *PA* 1.1).

[82] The question of the relation of *ethismos* (or its product, *ethos*) and *empeiria*—both of which are said at different points to have to do with the *thats* (for example 1.4; 1.7; 6.7; 6.8)—is a puzzle neglected in LaBarge's nicely corrective, if perhaps unsurprising (2006).

and is thus in a position to articulate the relevant universals and general rules and give them to others.

(S1) Ur-Character: Natural Excellence/Vice (*phusikē aretē*): we start with certain innate dispositions, susceptibilities and proclivities—some general human tendencies, others due to our own individual inheritance or make-up. These patterns of attention and focus, of behaviour and feeling can be well or badly adjusted, and will make the acquisition of good (or bad) habits easier or harder.[83]

(S2) Proto-Character: Habit-Excellence/Vice (*ethistē aretē*): the human, however, is an animal open to training, indeed one whose nature can be brought to its completion or perfection only by training—at least standardly. When young we need to be brought up, and our appetitive and emotional side habituated in its likes and dislikes, so that we enjoy and disenjoy, love and hate, the correct things (Plato's '*orthē paideia*' in the *Laws*). From the many influences of our environment,[84] and by doing what we are told—and being chastised when we do not—we learn to conform our appetites and emotions to the voice of reason, a voice that starts as one of external authority backed with physical force and sanction, but into which space our own reason will eventually slip, armed with shame, guilt, pride, and remorse (see *NE* 4.9). We develop a *preparatory* character, one akin to the full character we shall eventually possess (10.9, 1179b29–31). One aspect is learning *to control* our natural appetites and emotions, becoming masters of ourselves (1.3, 1095a6–11, *enkrateia*). Another is to *transform* them so that they have a certain shape, a certain pattern of expression, in which they express what we take *as* fitting or called for, *as* what the situation 'merits'; *as* things to do and not to do (as reason determines this, a reason that is at this stage largely external, but which soon starts to be familiar and made our own). They are then no longer natural reactions and responses; but those of a socialized creature being inducted into social practices, developing a sense of social situation: 'this is what *we* do here'. This is to start to look at things as called for by a sense of proper order, as fine and base—as aimed at the different, integrative, end of the *kalon* (see 3.8.1117a4–9). Habituation seeks to instill correct opinion of what actions and reactions are fine or just, etc. (*orthodoxein*: 7.8, 1151a19)—and a love of them that comes with the practice of doing them, and a growing displeasure and disappointment with ourselves, embarrassment and shame in front of others, when we fail. In failing to meet their expectations, we fail in our own, both of meeting theirs, and of meeting the demands of the

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[83] Aristotle notes that we apply our action/passion and character language also to animals, even if in places only analogically; but if there are natural patterns of behavior in animals, so too presumably in the human which is also an animal. These natural patterns can constrain what is possible, in general and in the individual case; and their natural weighting can ease or impede the task of socialization and habituation.

[84] Aristotle, like Plato, thinks the environment—the kinds of social exposure—children are subjected to needs careful control, at the political level.

situations into the appreciation of whose nature and force they are trying to lever us. This is a new way of looking at the world, a new kind, or dimension, of acting and feeling, and a new kind of end or motivation 'because it is fine, because it is the thing *we* do/to do' versus simply 'because I feel like it' (see 3.8, 1117a4–9). In this we are developing a sense of values, of how life should go and not go, a sense of a place in a common humanity.[85]

(S3–S4) Experiential character and proper-character (*kuria aretē*): prepared by our habit character, by what we have become accustomed to practice, we look to increase our appreciation of the fine. Our love of doing it increases our discrimination and understanding of it, our sensitivity to its presence and absence, our ability to track it (10.5.1175a29–b1). We need experience of life's doings, and their variety (1.3, 1094b27–95a4; 6.8, 1142a14–16) in order to be able correctly to determine *for ourselves* what is the wise thing to do or feel (the mean, the fine and fitting), although we shall still be open to advice (see 3.3, 1112b10–11; 10.9, 1179b23–31). If habituated excellence (or vice) gives us starting points—ends in action—(1.4, 1095b2–7; 7.8. 1151a17–19) so does experience (6.8, 1142a10–20; see *An.Pr.* 1.30, 46a17–27): the *kath'hekasta*, the particulars, which are the subject of *phronesis* (see 6.7, 1141b14ff; 6.11, 1143b2–5) become familiar only through experience and this requires time (1.3; 2.1 init; 6.8.1142a 14–22). (They are matters of perception: *Meta.* 1.1, 981b10; *NE* 7.3, 1147a25–6. This is perhaps the informed perception that is *nous* [6.13; see also 6.11].)

Experience enables us to discriminate deeds or products correctly, and to be aware of the means and manner of attaining them, and what harmonizes with what (1181a19–21)—experience here being what hones our accurate observation and sensitivity to the varied aspects of situations (1180b17–18; see Tinbergen 1960).

Our powers of reasoning, together with such experience of life, enable us to determine what the end of living and acting successfully requires of us, and how to attain that. The general (overlapping) roles of reason seem to be (a) refinement and sophistication—in situational appreciation, and in creative and imaginative response, taking us forward to deal with more complex cases than habits; (b) integration and unification—integrating our various habits around our sense of the fine *tout court*; and (c) reflection and understanding—reflecting on them and coming to appreciate more deeply the correctness of these habits, their rationale (as in *Rep* and *Laws* passage)—understanding what is so good about them, why it is correct to treat people this way and not that, and why this activity is worthwhile and that not, etc. Aristotle's model of such understanding –of understanding the whys– is *universalistic*: we understand the why of the particular case when we see it falling under the relevant universal, the common element (one who knows the universal in a way knows 'all the things under it'; *Meta* 1.2, 982a21–3; see 8–10).

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[85] Within habituation we can distinguish different strands: (a) being trained to like something by extrinsic temporarily associated pleasures, where this is not being habituated to like it for those extrinsic pleasures, but a way of being led to like it *for itself—as an end*; (b) being trained to value some end—to take it as the proper way for oneself to go on, and with this sense of self, shame too enters—and to like, or love it, *as an end of such value*. How this comes about—whether as a new object of liking, or is differentiated out of more indeterminate likings and disliking—is a matter of complex description, involving also facts such as the human capacity for the perception of time, of a sense of a self over time, of language, and socialization.

Crudely, then, we have a proper or full virtue when intelligence is added, and this is roughly a kind of experientially informed and creative perception of particulars/particular cases –informed by our trained experience of life in its variety– where we are disposed to choose as our own reason tells us is wise. (Full vice is a corruption of this.)

Now in 6.7, 1141b14–23, as in 10.9, 1180b7–28; 1181a9ff, 19ff, and *Meta* 1.1, 981a1–b12, Aristotle distinguishes between experiential *phronesis* and 'architectonic' *phronesis*, the one being knowledge and recognition of particulars, the other of universals. Associated with these are *two* kinds of practically wise person, the (merely) experienced *phronimos* who knows only the relevant *thats* (the particular facts), and the full *phronimos* who knows not only the *thats* but also the *whys* (the relevant universals). The same distinction occurs also with respect to the skills/arts. If you at least know the *thats*, you are in a position to act appropriately, unlike the 'mere theorist' who knows only the *whys* (1141b18–21; *Meta.* 1.1, 981a13–24); if you also know the *whys* you can understand the action/production as the correct one, and explain and justify it. Both figures then are practical, because action is concerned with particulars and requires knowledge of them.[86] And, although this is not entirely clear in the text, both figures I think have full or *proper excellence*—the excellences of character integrated so as to do what reason says is the wise thing to do or feel: for this integration can presumably be afforded by experience, allowing one to adjust the competing considerations of different excellences (that in this situation, that consideration is outweighed or silenced by this one).

How are we to think of experience operating here? (A) One way is as *the informed eye* (6.11, 1143b11–14; see 1144a29–36). They just look and see what needs doing (that the bread is now cooked; they tap the melon and say it is ripe; they look at the clouds, sniff the breeze, and order the sails to be reefed in). (B) Another is as *experiential induction*, which they induce from certain past instances to the present one, from particulars to *particular*.[87] To take a technical example from *Meta.* 1.1, 981a7–9, if one knows that chicken soup did Callias good when he had a rash like that, and did Socrates good when he had a similar rash, and so on, one is in a position to take action when Plato develops such a rash. The difference between (A) and (B) comes out in responses. The former says simply that experience tells them there is a storm brewing—it is more something they can now 'see' than something they take themselves to reason to. The latter cites instances, evidence of what happened with Callias and Socrates that makes it reasonable to suppose this will help Plato.[88]

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[86] Are they *equally* practical? The one with the universal and explanation will perhaps have a potentially wider coverage (see 10. 9, 1180b16–20); but the one with local experience may be better in the sense of knowing the quirks and exceptions of the particular cases at hand (see 1180b18–19); but even here it helps to have the universal, to know that it is a deviation, from the norm (see 1180b20–8) .

[87] At 1139b28–9 Aristotle appears to reserve 'induction' (*epagogē*) to what I call 'universal induction'.

Turning to the full *phronimos*, here on the basis of their many experiences the agent induces from particular instances to *universals*—in such *universal induction*, they abstract out the supposed common element (*Meta* 1.1, 981a10–12; *NE* 10.9, 1180b14–16), to something of the form:

Such-and-such benefits/is healthy for *those in such and such a condition.*

A universal of *the matter* (1147a4–5) and a universal of *the agent* (whether any human or humans of a certain sort: 10.9, 1180b15): for example light digestible food benefits those with measles; dry food benefits every man (see *Meta.* 1.1, 981a5–12; *De An.* 434a16–19; *NE* 6.7, 1141b18–19; 7.3.1147a4–7; 10.9, 1180b8–9; 14–15), where these are the concepts proper to the science or art: the chicken soup was good for Plato because it was easily digestible and he had measles, the easily digestible is what helps with measles (perhaps there will be a further explanation of this, or perhaps it will be an immediate principle). That is, the full *technist* comes to appreciate the common elements whose structure is explanatory of the many cases. (The initial case will be from individual instances, but presumably there are then further cases from universals to higher universals—see DeMoss 1990.)

In the practical case, we shall have:

Such and such a human/All humans ought to do such and such. (*De. An.* 434a16–19; see *NE* 1147a29){90}

How does this look with the practical case? (For example 'all men should do what is just/ not throw away their shields?', 'all receivers of favours should show gratitude'). I take Aristotle to have a universalistic, 'legislative' model of practical and technical knowledge (see 7.10, 1152a19–24). Admittedly, with practical knowledge itself and with technical knowledge in areas like medicine and navigation, this knowledge requires supplement because its universals hold only for the most part, and require supplement by extensive experiential knowledge of particulars, because of the defective nature of the subject matter which admits of considerable indeterminacy and imprecision (*NE* 5.10, 1137b11–32; see 1.3, 1094b14–27; 3.3, 1112a34–b9; see the role of *psephismata*

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[88] An analogue would be the case studies in the Hippocratic corpus.

5.5, 1137b27–32; 6.8, 1141b24–8; 7.10, 1152a20–1). So there is a kind of non-codifiability here, but it is of a limited sort, supplementary to the codifiable (see 10.9, 1180b13–28). This however requires its own discussion.

7. Conclusion

One can be suspicious of aspects of these various stages, especially about Aristotle's universalistic model of what it is to understand, to possess a 'why' or explanation; yet the basic perspective of *practical philosophy,* with its view of what it is for a mature human to act and react, and to form a character—to 'grow up'—strikes me as powerful, however many questions it then provokes: for example, how far it is a regulative ideal, rather than an obtainable human reality? It assumes the importance of becoming a unified being—and a certain picture of that (compare the modern notion of integrity): but how true is this to the dynamic flux of human life, where no sooner have you learnt mildly to cope with certain situations, than you are faced with new and must learn again (helped or hindered by your past)? So one needs to keep Beginner's Mind: but perhaps this too is real *phronesis.*

The perception of time, or rather of oneself living through time, having a beginning and an end—a life time—seems to us so intimately bound with rationality, and with being an agent. It creates a wider context, indeed the widest context, the broadest stage on which we can strut our piece (though the piece we strut may be a piece in an even wider picture beyond our own in lifespans, part of some transgenerational project to cure cancer or reach the moon, if not the stars). And our formal notion—the criterion—of success in living in this context of a whole life to live, is the fine—*a wonderful life,* though as with Wittgenstein's wonderful life, our aesthetic may not run entirely to a Greek *taxis*. 'A great disorder is an order.'

11

Aristotle on Responsibility for One's Character[1]

Pierre Destrée

1. Introduction

Cicero famously classified Aristotle with Democritus, Heraclitus, and Empedocles as a determinist.[2] But that was an exception among ancient commentators. From at least Alexander on through the scholastic tradition, Aristotle was generally considered to be the first holder of a non-deterministic account of responsibility. And this understanding has been generally accepted among modern scholars too, even though most of them have complained either that Aristotle did not really see the exact problem of determinism vs. a libertarian conception of responsibility, or that he should have explained his incompatibilist position in a much clearer and more obviously consistent way. As David Ross put it: 'On the whole we must say that he shared the plain man's belief in free will but that he did not examine the problem very thoroughly, and did not express himself with perfect consistency.'[3]

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[1] I read various ancestors of this chapter at the Humbold University, Berlin; Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne; Boston College; the University of Wisconsin-Madison; Stanford University; and the Princeton University Annual Classical Philosophy Conference in December 2007. I would like to thank Ch. Rapp, P.-M. Morel, and A. Jaulin, the late John Cleary, P. Gottlieb, Ch. Bobonich, and J. Cooper, and Ch. Wildberg for inviting me, and to thank them as well as my audiences (especially T. Penner, H. Lorenz, and B. Morison who was my brilliant commentator at Princeton) for critiques, comments, and suggestions which greatly helped me to, hopefully, improve my first thoughts on the subject. I also wish to thank J.-L. Labarrière and M. Zingano for lively discussions on this theme. I am particularily grateful to M. Pakaluk for his thoughtful remarks on a penultimate draft, as well as for his wonderful editorial job. The Princeton Colloquium where I presented one of these ancestors was dedicated to the memory of Michael Frede. I am fully aware he would have argued vigorously against my incompatibilist interpretation, as he himself took Aristotle to hold a determinist view on responsibility (see his 2007 posthumous paper); but since history of philosophy is also philosophical debate, I imagine he would not have been totally displeased to be tentatively challenged by an admirer of his work.

[2] *De fato*, 39.

Things have changed dramatically in the last forty years or so. Since the important and widespread work of David Furley, many, if not most, scholars now seem to be convinced that Aristotle was fully, even though not explicitly, committed to the sort of determinism which was defended by Chrysippus, and his followers among the Stoic school.[4]

A compatibilist typically holds that an agent is responsible for an action simply if he is the cause of that action; an incompatibilist maintains, rather, that an agent is responsible for an action only of he could have acted otherwise. The former will hold that the two well-known conditions Aristotle sets down in his *NE* 3.1 for an act to be voluntary suffice for holding an agent responsible for his actions, namely, that he be the unforced cause of his actions, and that he be aware of their circumstances. This conception of responsibility seems fully compatible with determinism: even if all of an agent's actions are the result of desires, or 'choices' (whatever that exactly corresponds to in Aristotle's vocabulary), that are completely determined by antecedent desires, it suffices that the agent act from *his own* desires, or 'choices', to be held responsible for his actions (and our responsibility for our emotions and character would be accounted for in the same way). On this view, voluntariness, as circumscribed by Aristotle, is the necessary and sufficient condition for responsibility.

In contrast, the incompatibilist maintains that voluntariness is not a sufficient condition for responsibility on the grounds that, as mentioned, the freedom to act otherwise—what one might call the 'could-have-done-otherwise' condition—is an indispensable requirement for responsibility. Responsibility on this view appears to be incompatible with determinism: keep all of the antecedent causes fixed; if the agent nonetheless could have done something other than what he actually did, then apparently his action was not (at least fully) *determined* by those antecedent causes.

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[3] Ross (1923: 209). Many other major Aristotelian scholars have taken Aristotle's indeterministic view on responsibility for granted, and made similar reproaches: before Ross, see especially Grant (1885), II, 25; after Ross, see, among others, Joachim (1951: 107–11); Gauthier-Jolif (1959: II 1, 217–20); Hardie (1980: 173–81); see also Huby (1967), and Hardie's reply (1968). More recently, see in particular Bostock (2000: ch. 5) and Heinaman (2009).

[4] The chapters of Furley I have in mind are Furley (1977) and (1978). The best subsequent defences of Aristotle's deterministic account of responsibility, to my knowledge, are Donini (2009); Roberts (1989); Everson (1990); Meyer (1993), (1998), and (2006). See also O'Keefe (2005: ch. 3), and the remarks made by Bobzien in her magisterial (1998), especially 282, and the trenchant analyses by Frede (2007). It must be added that Loening (1967) paved the way to such a reading, and gave the main arguments that these scholars have built on in a more detailed way. Other interpreters explicitly or implicitly accept that Aristotle's conception of responsibility does not clash with determinism, without actively arguing for a deterministic account: Irwin (1980); Engberg-Pedersen (1983: ch. 9); Curren (1989); Ott (2006). Finally, it is worth noting that (perhaps because of the massive influence of the works of Strawson and Frankfurt) this determinist way of reading Aristotle has also recently been extended to Epicurus, who was traditionally held to be the first precursor of libertarianism; see especially O'Keefe (2005) and Bobzien (2006).

As I have said, it seems that most interpreters nowadays are convinced that Aristotle is committed to a compatibilist theory, and they have tried to show not only that everything Aristotle says can be interpreted that way, but also that the interpretations of the few seemingly 'incompatibilist' passages rest on false and anachronistic assumptions. Following the relatively few scholars who have explicitly aimed to oppose this recent wave (mostly Richard Sorabji, Carlo Natali, and Sarah Broadie),[5] I would like to challenge that view.

My focus is *NE* 3.5, where I take Aristotle to be mainly concerned with defending a person's responsibility for his own character, since that seems to be required within Aristotle's ethical framework: since actions (and emotions), he thinks, are expressions or signs of one's character, responsibility for one's actions (and emotional reactions) requires responsibility for one's character. Or to put it in a more familiar way (which Aristotle takes to be a confirming argument): since responsibility is a necessary condition for meriting praise and blame, and we praise and blame character (which is reflected in actions), then people must be responsible for their character.[6] Yet responsibility for one's character does not seem to allow the incompatibilist 'could-have-done-otherwise' requirement: since my character derives, in one way or another, from my early education (and perhaps also, in some way, from nature), how could I possibly be held responsible for it? Since my character has been forged by experiences from my early youth on, may I sensibly say that I could have acquired another character than the one I eventually have, if I would have just decided, or wished it so? Again, the 'could-have-done-otherwise' requirement applies plausibly enough to my actions, as it seems plausible to say that I might have chosen to act otherwise than I did. However, the condition applies to emotions only problematically: I certainly may say that I *should* not have reacted the way I did; but may I sensibly say that I actually *could* have reacted in another way than how I did? *A fortiori*, then, neither does it easily apply to one's character.

I suggest that our ordinary, pre-reflective view of the matter lead us into a paradox. On the one hand, we all (like Ross's 'plain man') take for granted that the 'could-have-done-otherwise' condition is a requirement for real responsibility: we suppose that if you could not have done otherwise, whatever the reasons, then you can hardly be held responsible for what you have done. On the other hand, when we blame or praise somebody, we are not concerned only with the particular action he has done, since we also in many cases take his character to be involved in one way or another. Yet, how could the 'could-have-done-otherwise' requirement apply to one's character?

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[5] Sorabji (1980: ch. 14); Natali (2004: chs 8 and 9); and Broadie (1991: ch. 3). See also Moline (1989) and Di Muzio (2000) and (2008), who mainly focus on the relationship between upbringing and action; Zingano (2007: ch. 10); and Labarrière (2009), who offers interesting remarks on the expression *to eph' hêmin*.

[6] On this agenda of *NE* 3.5, see Pakaluk (2005: 144–6).

It is therefore no wonder that contemporary philosophers working on this topic have tended to downplay one of the horns of this dilemma. Incompatibilists (but also some compatibilists) typically deny the importance of character, arguing that the only thing we require in this area is responsibility for actions. Consider the practice of judges or police officers: they do not fine you because you *generally* tend to drive too fast; they only fine you, say, for a particular instance of speeding through a particular school zone. But compatibilists, on the other hand, claim that the 'could-have-done-otherwise' requirement is nothing but a false impression, or merely the expression of a wish, without any true or scientifically respectable content: responsibility, they say, does not rely on something merely hypothetical, such as some general power of acting otherwise, or one's ability to have acted otherwise in some particular situation.[7]

And yet, against the incompatibilist, one might cite the ordinary practice of police authorities, who distinguish between a first-time offender, who may have been presented with a crime of opportunity, and a hardened professional thief. In the first case, it is the robbery which seems to be primarily condemned, especially if the accused can prove that he has never committed a robbery before—that is, that he should not be considered as having the 'character' of a thief. In the second case, it seems that at least one reason to blame and punish the hardened thief more severely is that we think we have to condemn additionally his bad habits, or 'character', and make sure he will be placed in circumstances (a 'penitentiary') which will allow him occasion to change it. Surely, such considerations at least raise a doubt about the feasibility of separating isolated actions from the person's character and habits.

Now compatibilism, even if it accounts for such ordinary experience better, seems remote from our most common and most profound moral intuition: even granted that we may perfectly well blame or praise actions or characters without any appeal to 'free choice', it remains highly counterintuitive to say that agents really do *merit* praise or blame for actions which they could not have helped doing in any case, or for characters which they could not have helped ending up with. Moreover, one might urge that the reason we do not admit the excuse, 'I could not have helped doing, or being, such and such', for bad behaviour, is that we normally do not believe that such a claimed disability could be real (except in very unusual and even pathological cases, such as mental illness, where it is obvious that a person really cannot help it). Again, we do not take character traits to be like compulsive habits. For instance, one may reasonably suppose that in most cases a speeder speeds because he habitually speeds, and yet no police officer would ever take a putative 'unbreakable habit' as a valid excuse! We seem to suppose that this 'could have been different' qualification, in the case of either an action or a trait of character, is a requirement for responsibility from a practical point of view, whether or not it is an 'illusion', as some physicalists might claim. But then the puzzle remains: how can we be held responsible for a character acquired in early youth, if responsibility (in the strong sense, linked to meriting praise or blame) has as its very condition the possibility of things having turned out otherwise?

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[7] This is one of the main reasons why compatibilists—at least those who follow Strawson's approach—are thought to resolve our case properly. On Strawson's view we can perfectly well blame or praise someone for a bad trait, on just the same grounds that we would blame him for a bad action, namely, that it does not meet some moral standard tacitly accepted by that person himself. For a recent compatibilist defence of responsibility for one's character, see Sher (2006).

This rough presentation of our problem quickly captures, I think, the problem we face when reading *NE* 3.5. These two horns of the dilemma which are, so to speak, the two components of any unreflective view of responsibility, are, I suggest, the point of departure of Aristotle.[8] And I will try to show that, contrary to what might be expected at first glance, the argument of the chapter reveals that Aristotle is in fact committed to an incompatibilist theory of responsibility for one's character, and that his theory is interestingly different from both compatibilist theories of Stoic origin, and from the usual incompatibilist ones, which are centred on actions.

2. Does Aristotle endorse the 'could-have-done-otherwise' condition?

To begin, we should first make sure that Aristotle does indeed accept a 'could-have-done-otherwise' requirement. As both sides in the debate acknowledge, the expression *eph' hêmin* is at the core of the problem here. Does this expression only mean 'dependent on us' in a very loose way, or, more specifically, 'up to us' in the strong sense, implying the idea of freedom of choice? The most crucial and controversial passage is at the very beginning of our chapter 3.5:

> T1: When acting depends on us, not acting does so too, and when saying No does so, saying Yes does so too; so that if acting, when it is a fine thing to act, depends on us, not acting also depends on us when it is shameful not to act, and if not acting, when it is a fine thing not to act, depends on us, acting when it is a shameful thing to act also depends on us. But if it depends on us to do fine things and shameful things, and similarly not to do

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[8] Following many commentators who have noticed it (from Grant 1885: II, 25 onwards), I admit that in fact Aristotle is not directly dealing with the problem of determinism here in a metaphysical sense, and that such a dealing only explicitly began with the Stoics (and maybe also with Epicurus). I thus agree with Broadie when she says that Aristotle is best viewed as a 'proto-indeterminist' (1991: 158). Yet it seems to me that Aristotle has at least clearly seen that he is arguing against an objector who tries to undermine his theory of responsibility by coming up with determinist types of excuses for wrong actions (such as early education, and nature).

> them, and this, it is agreed, is what it is to be, respectively, a good person and a bad one, then being decent people, and being worthless ones, will depend on us. (1113b7–14)[9]

Compatibilists argue that we (modern people) should refrain from understanding this expression as 'up to us' in the strong sense—which is how we are likely to take it on a first impression—since Aristotle is using this expression as a quasi-synonym for 'within ourselves' (*en hêmin*), which lacks such connotations. They maintain that, as one can see by reading the first chapter of Book 3, the voluntary is defined in opposition to the involuntary, the first condition of which is for an action to have its origin 'outside ourselves' (1110a1):

> T2: So, given that 'involuntary' applies to what comes about by force and what comes about because of ignorance, the voluntary would seem to originate within oneself (*en autôi*), when one knows the particular factors that constitute the location of action. (1111a22–4)

Admittedly there is something of a quasi-synonymy, as we can see throughout chapter 5, (where in some passages our mss. have both readings!). And yet it is not a total synonymy, since as Aristotle clearly says at 1110a17–18:

> T3: For any action of which the origin is in himself (*en autôi*), it is up to him (*ep' autôi*) to do this action or not.

This means that the 'within oneself' is a sufficient condition of 'dependent on oneself': it is because the principle of an action is 'in us' that it is also 'dependent on us', or 'up to us', to do it or not do it. But the text does not rule out that where the principle of an action is 'in us' and consequently also 'dependent on us', the agent could have acted otherwise.

According to compatibilist readings, there is no evidence in our text suggesting such an interpretation, or for translating 'up to us' as 'free' to do, or not do, such and such.[10] All Aristotle is explicitly saying, the compatibilist holds, is that because the principle of the action is 'in you', it is 'dependent on you', or 'up to you' in a very loose sense, to do it or not to. To do it or not do it is not a matter of choice: it is just a matter of a general (or 'abstract') possibility to do, or not do, such and such (see especially Loening 1967: 284–5). Take the famous example of the captain who threw his cargo overboard (3.1, 1110a8–11): his action was voluntary in the sense that it was 'up to him' to do it. For since he is the captain, he has the possibility, or the general power, of ordering his crew to jettison the cargo or not ordering it. But this does not imply that, given the circumstances, and his character, he had the free choice of giving such an order or not. On the contrary: since he actually is a good captain, he necessarily ordered that. He certainly may have deliberated before deciding to do so, for example, what exact quantity of his cargo he would need to jettison, or exactly at what point in the storm, and the like. But just as the doctor, as Aristotle famously says, does not deliberate as to whether to cure or not cure patients (3.2, 1112b12–13), the good captain did not deliberate in the middle of the storm as to whether he would save his cargo or his crew. So it was up to him to jettison the cargo in the sense that he had the power, as a captain, to order doing so or not. But it was not up to him to do so or not in the sense that he could have decided otherwise in the same circumstances. Given the circumstances, and the sort of captain he is, he necessarily decided to do so.

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[9] Translations of the *NE* are from Broadie and Rowe (2002), sometimes modified.

[10] Rackham's Loeb translation of T1 is probably the most 'libertarian' translation you may find on the market: 'Where we are free to act we are also free to refrain from acting, and where we are able to say No we are also able to say Yes; if therefore we are responsible for doing a thing when to do it is right, we are also responsible for not doing it when not to do it is wrong, and if we are responsible for rightly not doing a thing, we are also responsible for wrongly doing it. But if it is in our power to do and to refrain from doing right and wrong, and if, as we saw, being good or bad is doing right or wrong, it consequently depends on us whether we are virtuous or vicious'. In fact, Grant (1885: II, 25) already suggested 'free' as 'translation' of *eph' hêmin*.

The case of the captain is the typical case of 'mixed actions', which are voluntary and involuntary at the same time, but under different descriptions. He acted voluntarily as it was up to him to jettison the cargo; but, in the 'absolute', he acted involuntarily and is therefore not blamable for doing so, since he was 'forced' by the circumstances of the storm to take that decision, which he would never have made under normal circumstances. Consider instead, then, obvious cases of full voluntariness. Like any other human being, the perfectly moderate person (the *sôphrôn*) as well as the typically indulgent one (the *akolastos*) has the general possibility of acting in a morally good way, or in a wrong way. Yet this does not mean, compatibilists insist, that either of them would have the 'free choice' of acting other than the way they eventually do act: the *sôphron* will always act in a moral way, as he does not have any wrong appetites, whereas the *akolastos* will always act in a wrong way, since he does not have any morally good principles (or ends, in Aristotle's vocabulary). And they will necessarily act this or that way, because that is the way they are, or more precisely that is how their moral disposition (*hexis*) is. But compatibilists will urge that this poses no threat to their theory of responsibility: for holding him responsible for his action, it suffices that the person was not forced from the outside to act as he did, and that he had the general capacity to do so or not and furthermore knows the circumstances of his action. Being 'autonomous' in this sense, the agent himself, and no one else, is the very cause of his acts, and that makes him responsible for them. The claim of T1 above, and indeed of the rest of 3.5, is that since actions are the expressions or 'signs' of a disposition, of either a virtuous, or morally bad character, our character must also be 'up to us'. But this too, it would be argued, poses no threat to a compatibilist theory of responsibility: since being virtuous or not is a matter of a general capacity for human beings, and therefore 'up to any of us', we are to be held responsible for our character as well.

At first sight, such a reading appears very attractive. But one may wonder if this could sensibly apply to the expression and logic of our chapter.

The first thing to be noted is the force of the expressions 'saying Yes', and 'saying No': 'For when acting depends on us, not acting does so too, and when saying No does so, saying Yes does too.' It is obvious that Aristotle is here relying on a common way of thinking about our actions: in any case where we can say Yes, we also have the very possibility of saying No. In other words, we only voluntarily do something when we have the possibility of saying 'No, I will not do it'. If we do not have that very possibility of saying No, as is perhaps the case of a person under a tyrant's power, we simply do not act voluntarily. To act voluntarily therefore implies that we have (in one way or another which I shall explain later on) the very possibility of refusing to act.

It is true that the following lines ('so that if acting, when it is a fine thing to act, depends on us, not acting also depends on us when it is shameful not to act, and if not acting, when it is a fine thing not to act, depends on us, acting when it is a shameful thing to act also depends on us') may be interpreted as if Aristotle just wanted to say that it is up to us, very generally speaking, to behave virtuously (that is, when one does fine acts when it is fine, and not doing such when it is shameful) or badly (that is, in not acting when it is fine to act, and acting when it is not). But I think one could hardly read in this very loose sense the conclusion which Aristotle wishes to draw from this, given his preceding use of the expressions 'saying Yes' and 'saying No': Aristotle's conclusion that it then 'depends on us to do fine things and shameful things, and similarly not to do them too', most naturally means that both the doing or the not doing these very acts (whether fine, or bad) is up to us. And since one always has the very possibility of saying either Yes, or No, it means that acting this or that way depends on the way one will answer in the given case. In sum, from the way Aristotle relies on the connection that we commonly presume between speaking ('Yes', 'No') and action (compliance or refusal), it seems to be beyond any reasonable doubt, as Broadie very aptly says, that Aristotle assumes that 'the agent is at least implicitly aware of the options as options' (1991: 153), and that, one might add, the agent has the real possibility, or the choice, to go for one option instead of the other.

The second remarkable expression is the word *kurios*, which Aristotle uses three times in the same context: the person was *kurios* of not being drunk (1113b32); people were *kurioi* of taking appropriate care (1114a3); people (says the objection) cannot be *kurioi* over the appearance (1114a32). On the compatibilist interpretation, this word is no more than a synonymy for 'up to us': when referring to the person who committed an action when drunk, Aristotle would just be saying that the drunken man, like any normal human being, had the general power of raising his arm and drinking, or not. But in fact the word is quite emphatic, which Aristotle usually uses (when using it with this meaning) when he wants to emphasize the idea that a person has real power over something, and can therefore master such and such a thing, or another person. It is noteworthy that at the beginning of Book 3, he uses this word twice to describe the tyrant who has taken one's children as hostages, and therefore can force you to commit a wrong act (1110a2–6). In this case, you are not *kurios* of committing that action, since the tyrant is *kurios* of your children, and therefore *kurios* of the wrong action he has ordered you to commit. To be sure, you are the efficient cause of this act (your hand has actually committed, say, the murder of the tyrant's personal enemy), and therefore, in a way, you have committed it voluntarily; but you are not its ultimate cause, and therefore you are not responsible for it, since you were not *kurios* of it. In this case, it seems to me, it would be implausible to take Aristotle to be saying that you were not responsible for this murder because you failed to have the general possibility, or capacity, for committing murder, or that the tyrant, being *kurios* of your children, had the general capability of hurting them or not, or of forcing you to act that way, or not. On the contrary what Aristotle strongly suggests is that because you were under the tyrant's power, you could not do otherwise; indeed, as we currently say, 'you had no other option'.

Yet another word confirms this: the verb *exestin*, which Aristotle uses twice here, typically means the very effective possibility of doing such and such. For instance, at 1114a15–20 comparing the akratic person to an ill person, who did not trust his doctor, Aristotle comments that: 'Previously, then, he had the very possibility not to be ill, but once he has let himself go, he no longer has it.' At this point Aristotle wants to draw attention to every possibility and option the ill patient had of trusting his doctor, or not. Now that the patient has eventually become ill, because, say, he decided not to take the appropriate pills, he does not have that possibility or option anymore. But had he listened to his doctor, he would not have been affected by this illness. More precisely: he could have listened to his doctor, which might have had the consequence that he might not have become ill. He is therefore responsible for his illness—since he could have done otherwise.

Such is the tenor of Aristotle's argument. In general, in the chapter, the way he writes, and his choice of words and expressions from common ways of speaking, are meant to urge the reader, I suggest, to conclude that the possibility of committing such and such or not is not just a general possibility, or capability, but the very possibility that an agent has to do or, alternatively, not do, such and such.

This linguistic conclusion is additionally confirmed by the logical character of the argument of the text. In order to prove that it is true that we are to be held responsible for our character, Aristotle relies on the common practice of praising and blaming, whether in private education or in public courts:

> T4: They forcibly correct and impose penalties on wrongdoers, provided they did not act under force, or because of ignorance for which they are not themselves responsible. (1113b23–5)

There is no doubt that in Aristotle's time as in ours, ignorance is the most common excuse that one gives for not being held responsible for such and such an action. I may have committed a wrong action when, for example, I violently hurt my colleague because I was angry with him. But since I was pretty drunk, I was unaware and ignorant of what I was doing. I cannot therefore be held responsible for this. Or so I might urge. Yet any judge who heard this excuse would reply, as Aristotle explains:

> T5: The origin is in the agent; it was in his power not to get drunk, which was cause of his ignorance. (1113b32–3)

To be sure his unawareness, or ignorance, was caused by drunkenness: but he is responsible for his drunkenness, since it was in his power not to drink.

But this example cannot easily be understood in the way compatibilists suggest. For the text clearly does not mean that one has very generally the possibility of being drunk or not! It just means that this particular agent must be punished since he could have refrained from drinking as much as he did; that is, he had the option, or 'choice', at a given time, of drinking or not. As Aristotle forcefully says, it was 'in his power (*kurios*) not to drink', which is most naturally taken to mean that the person had the very capability, at that very moment, of refraining from drinking.

Another class of examples excusing by appeal to ignorance involve carelessness: I may have offended a colleague of mine when I teased him about his pretty wife, but that happened because I simply was not thinking that his wife had actually passed away some time ago. The cause of my lack of cognizance is my carelessness. But, says Aristotle, I was *kurios* of it (1114a2): I could (and should) have had in mind that this colleague is now a widow. Aristotle is unmistakably clear on this issue: excuses like that are unconvincing in a law court, or in private, as the wrongdoer had the very possibility of refraining from getting into such and such particular *hexis* (drunkenness, or thoughtlessness); that is, he could have done otherwise, and, if so, he would not have been unaware, or ignorant, in the way that presumably was the condition for his doing wrong.[11]

'But now', says the philosophical objector in the ersatz play, 'what if the agent is the kind of person not to take care?' (1114a3–4). That is, what if such a momentary disposition is in fact the expression of a deeply ingrained general

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[11] Note that in cases of thoughtlessness it is not appropriate to say that the agent 'is aware of options as options', precisely because he does not think of one of the options. Hence Aristotle's appeal to our ability to say 'Yes' or 'No' should not be construed as a psychological fact only about what is 'in the mind' of someone when or before he acts.

hexis, or character, so that the agent simply could not help behaving that way? The drunken agent, that is, might not actually have been capable of refraining from drinking because he is an inveterate drunkard, and the careless agent could not help not taking care in that situation because he is an obstinately careless person. So neither could have acted any other way, and therefore they are not to be held responsible for their wrongdoings.

Aristotle's reply is exactly the same as in the previous case: since we get into such-and-such disposition, too, only by acting this or that way, and we could have acted otherwise, we are responsible for our having that disposition. That drunken agent, after all, could have refrained from drinking in the first place, and, if so, he would not have gotten drunk, and he would not have been unaware of his doings. You may object that, in certain cases, a drunken agent could not refrain from drinking because he is an inveterate drunkard, or that the careless agent could not help behaving that way because he has always been like that; but, Aristotle replies, being a drunkard presupposes that you have become so by 'passing your time in drinking' (1114a6), and at that very moment you were *kurios* as to refraining from drinking, just as in the case of the person who is now ill because he did not obey his doctor. The drunkard and the ill person are thus responsible for being so disposed, because it was up to them to become so, or not: the former could have refrained from drinking his bottle of Metaxa every day, which has made him become a drunkard, and the latter could have obeyed his doctor.

Whether such an argument is convincing or not (and I shall come back to it later, to consider that question), one thing is sure enough: Aristotle's argument presupposes that the could-have-done-otherwise is the very condition of responsibility. Excuses for doing a wrong action are acceptable just in case the person could not have done otherwise. Having such-and-such disposition or character, as deeply ingrained as it may be, is no excuse, provided you could have done otherwise in early stage, and therefore not become such-and-such.

The argument which comes next in the text reinforces this reading. Aristotle adds that, if it is true that now that you are a drunkard, or an *akolastos* of any other kind, then you do not have the option to stop being so at will. And this is because you do not have that very possibility anymore: you cannot help being so, and therefore you could not have not drunk this bottle of Metaxa today. But you are responsible nonetheless, since you could have acted otherwise sometime in the past, as a result of which you could have acquired a different disposition, or character. It was 'up to you' to become such-and-such; therefore you are responsible for your character and consequently for the way you act according to it. It is thus clear that the expression *eph' hemin* must be understood in a very strong sense: now it is not 'up to you' to stop being such and such, but it was sometime in the past to become such and such. Now you do not have another option, but earlier you actually did. This argument, too, relies upon the same conception of responsibility: contrary to what is the case right now, it is because you really *could have done otherwise* that you are responsible for being such and such.

3. Praise and blame, and their conditions

Before returning to the problem of whether the could-have-done-otherwise requirement may be convincingly applied to one's acquisition of character, let us have a look at the way Aristotle presents the question of praise and blame. For it is quite evident that the way Aristotle sees how and when praise and blame are attributed will reflect his reasons for thinking an agent responsible for his actions. Among the many passages where Aristotle is evoking praise or blame, here is a first one, where Aristotle seems to be explaining why we praise an action, or a person:

> T6: It looks as though everything praiseworthy is praised for being of a certain quality and for being related somehow to something; for we praise the just man, the courageous man, and in general the good man, and also his virtue, on account of his actions and achievements (even a strong man, or someone good at running, and so on, we praise because of a certain natural quality and their relation to something good and worth doing). (1.12, 1101b12–18)

This passage gives us two reasons for praising: the one is that the praised activities should be good, the second is that the praised agent should be of a certain quality relative to a standard. The compatibilist will note, in interpreting this passage, that Aristotle is not appealing to free choice as a condition for praise, as the comparison with the athlete, and the 'strong man' show. We praise an athlete, or a pugilist because they have won this or that event, that is, we praise athletic performances, or great combats, or morally good actions for themselves, since we admire them as a job particularly well done, and not because someone has chosen to run rapidly, or to take part to this combat, or to do this action. And more generally we may also praise someone because he is a good athlete, or a morally good man—that is, he has excellently realized a general human possibility, having become, as it were, a fine member of our species. Or more precisely, as Aristotle explains in the context of this passage, we may also praise the respective *hexis* of a moral agent, or an athlete, since we appreciate its quality in relation to a standard. So in the sphere of moral excellence, the *phronimos* is the standard by which we can evaluate the value of such and such a man, and his actions, which means that we evaluate and praise (or blame) the relation, either close or distant, so to speak, that an agent has towards that standard (see Everson 1990: 98–9).

Now this passage alone could not give us the whole story, and the example of the athlete, and the pugilist should not be pressed too far. Aristotle explicitly says here that we praise them for their natural gift, as it is thanks to this that they won the race, or the combat. But what if that athlete had won, per impossible perhaps, a 100-metre Olympic competition without ever having trained? A first sight, we might say that we would also praise him, as we would also do in case of a naturally pretty girl or boy. But do they really *merit* praise? We certainly admire a magnificent bird, or lion, for being such, that is for being an excellent exemplar of their species, and thus we may probably praise them for being such; but would we sensibly add that we *should* praise them for that, or that they *deserve*, or *merit* such praise? And in the same way, conversely, we may feel some repugnance against a very ugly girl or boy; but it would be rather odd, and typically unjust, to say that we should blame them for being such. In all these cases, meriting praise, that is to be praiseworthy in the strong sense of the term, obviously requires another condition to be met.

A passage from the *Eudemian Ethics* explicitly says what this condition must be:

> T7: Since virtue and vice, and the acts that spring from them are respectively praised or blamed (for we do not give blame or praise for what is due to necessity, or chance, or nature, but only for what we ourselves are causes of (*autoi aitioi esmen*)—indeed, what another is the cause of, for that *he* (*ekeinos*) bears the blame or praise)—it is clear that virtue and vice have to do with matters where the man himself is the cause and the source of his acts (*aitios kai archê praxeôn*). (*EE* II 6, 1223a10–15)

That additional requirement for praise and blame is double: only actions done by human beings are subject to praise and blame, and only actions done by us as real causes of our actions merit praise and blame. We may admire a magnificent bird, and therefore praise it, but 'praise' here is used in a very loose way: nature cannot be subject to praise, in the strong sense of the word. In the same way, a naturally ugly girl cannot be blamed for being such since it is nature here which is cause of her ugliness, not herself. As Aristotle says: 'indeed, what another is the cause of, for that *he* (*ekeinos*) bears the blame or praise'. The remark is obviously taken from the common language: if I am not the real cause of something, because another person has made it, or made me make it, he is the one who deserves praise or blame. There is no reason not to expand this to nature too, in a looser way to speak: our ugly girl may perfectly say that nature, not herself, is to be 'blamed' for her ugliness. In fact, a passage from our chapter under consideration offers the same sort of example:

> T8: Not only are bad states of the soul voluntary, but with some people those of the body are so too, and these people too we blame; for while no one blames those who are naturally ugly, we *do* blame those who are ugly through lack of training and through neglect. (*NE* 3.5, 1114 a 21–5)

It would be odd to blame that ugly girl for being such, because precisely nature is obviously here the cause, and therefore 'responsible' and 'blamable' (in a loose sense of these terms) of her ugliness. But, Aristotle here suggests, we need to distinguish cases of purely natural ugliness, from cases of ugliness resulting from a lack of concern (or lack of training, where Aristotle has probably in mind some physical weakness). In the former case you are excused or even pitied, but in the latter you are responsible for your ugliness, because ugliness is the result of your lack of care.

A compatibilist might say that this is precisely all what we need for a deterministic view on responsibility: it suffices that the person herself be the cause of her appearance, and not someone, or something, else. But I think such a reading will not do, if we take seriously these examples. In the case of the example from T8, we have to suppose that this careless person is not very good-looking in the first place; otherwise the example would not make sense. So that means that unless one is totally deprived of any real effective possibility of doing otherwise, that is, of caring about his looks, even if one is not particularly good-looking, one is to be held responsible for his appearance. It therefore includes that one has, in a way or another the very choice to care or not care about one's looks: you may be naturally not very good-looking, Aristotle seems to be saying to his objector here, but since you have the real possibility to make your appearance better by taking care, it is up to you to decide yourself to do it or not; you are therefore responsible, and blamable for your bad looks.

Aristotle, one must admit, does not speak here of choice or decision, but this is what we find in what follows our T7, when he adds that 'we all admit that a man is the cause of his actions voluntarily done and according to his choice' (*EE* 2.6, 1223a16–17). By 'choice', Aristotle may mean not a particular choice, like the choice to run this particular race, but a choice of the way of doing such and such kind of things (like the choice of a certain kind of life Aristotle is talking about in *NE* 1.5, 1095b19–23), such as taking care of one's appearance. But this choice is like the one our drunkard made in the past, when choosing the way of life ('passing one's time in drinking') that would inevitably lead to the *hexis* of a drunkard. In brief, what we praise in the strict sense of the term is the choice that we have made to *become by ourselves* such and such. We may probably praise a runner who by only nature would have won this Olympic race, but it would probably be in the looser sense of the term; or at least, we most probably would say that he does not really merit praise (and actually we probably would be marvelling at him rather than praising him). What we usually do in fact is to praise an athlete for the excellent way he has managed to train, that is, to expand the possibility he has been given by nature; in other words, we praise him because he has chosen to develop such talents. A natural winner, in other words, does not deserve praise, because nature, not he (or he, but in a very weak sense), is the cause of his victory. In the case of the trained athlete, however, we praise his victory because it reveals, or is the result, of his disposition that he 'created' by training. And we praise him for doing so because he certainly could have done otherwise, by choosing not to train, and not to develop the talents he has gotten from nature.

A last passage from the *Rhetoric* explicitly confirms what Aristotle has so far let us guess:

> T9: Similarly, those who praise, as much as those who blame often pay no attention to whether a man has done what is helpful or harmful (as the case may be), but make it a matter for praise that he did what was honorable (*ti kalon*) to the neglect of his own interest. For example, they praise Achilles because he went to the aid of his comrade Patroclus, knowing fully well that he was bound to die, even though staying alive was a real possibility for him (*exon zên*). To him such a death was more honorable, although staying alive was in his interest (*sumpheron*). (1.3, 1358b38–1359a5)

The reason Aristotle gives for why we should praise such a fine act is not only, and not even primarily, because he performed such a fine and 'honourable' act, but rather because he chose to perform such an act *instead of* an expedient one that was available to him to do. And presumably the reason why this choice is particularly praiseworthy is that he had the very possibility of choosing otherwise: to stay alive was a real possibility (note Aristotle's use of the verb *exestin* here again), which he could have chosen, but did not.

Now someone (say, a hard determinist) might say that it was just Achilles' fate to die after this very act, and that nobody can reasonably have any 'free choice' against fate. Moreover (a soft determinist would now be saying), if Achilles had made the other choice, he would not have been Achilles anymore, with the courage of Achilles; or, in Aristotelian terms, since one's character seems to determine what one's choices and actions will be, how could we reasonably expect *Achilles* to have done otherwise?

Against the first counter-argument, I want to say only that nothing in the text requires such a reading. In this context, at least, Achilles is not given as an example of someone bound by fate, but only someone who had done a particularly admirable and praiseworthy action: namely, he was someone who chose to die instead of staying alive for the sake of the love he bears for his friend, Patroclus. Against the second counter-argument, one can point out that it is certainly not of the essence of Achilles, a human being, that he be courageous; that is, it would not be impossible for him to act otherwise. And if Achilles' character makes him such that he will not, as a matter of fact, act otherwise, still, as we have seen, Aristotle would say that he was able to act otherwise in the sense that he could have acted in ways other than those required for him to acquire such a character. Nonetheless, at this point we return to a worry mentioned earlier: If someone's character is formed during early childhood by the supervision of adults, and the company in which one is placed—neither of which is 'up to the child'—in what sense is it possible that someone 'could have done otherwise' in acquiring the character that he did?

4. Responsibility for character on the 'could-have-done-otherwise' condition

It is time now to come back to the main problem this chapter poses: Since he accepts the could-have-done-otherwise requirement, how can Aristotle sensibly say that we are responsible for the actions we do, if we are bound to act according to our character? Aristotle's initial reply seems to be that we are responsible for our actions, even if our character makes us bound to do them, if we are responsible for our character. A drunkard might have had no choice in drinking that bottle of Metaxa, which induced obliviousness and led him to hurt someone violently. But he is responsible for that act, because it was 'up to him' not to become a drunkard in the first place. But is such a view convincing? Moreover, is it compatible with what Aristotle repeatedly says about education in the first place?

Character is acquired through habituation, Aristotle regularly emphasizes, and this is meant to refer even to very early training. Since you become such-and-such by performing such-and-such activity, it is crucial for people to get habituated to behaving in such-and-such a way from their childhood onward. It comes as no surprise then that Aristotle does not hesitate in stating very strongly that:

> T10: It does not make a small difference whether people are habituated to behave in one way or in another from childhood on, but a very great one; or rather, it makes all the difference in the world. (*NE* 2.1, 1103b23–5)

It is difficult not to see here a clear expression of determinism: since you have no choice, in your early youth, in becoming such and such, because that early training depends on your parents, or your educators—who are good educators, and successful, just to the extent that they make their charges turn out how *they* want—it would be nonsense to claim the could-have-done-otherwise requirement in the case of character.

But such a deterministic interpretation of the passage undermines the very viewpoint determinists would like to defend. Determinists say that in order to be held responsible for one's actions, or character, it suffices that a person not be forced from the outside, for example, by another person. You are to be held responsible for what you do because these are *your* actions, and this is *your* character. That is, you yourself committed these acts voluntarily, without being forced; and therefore you are praiseworthy, or blamable, for this or that, even though you most certainly could not help acting, or could not be otherwise, because of your early education (although admittedly acting this or that way, and being this or that kind of person, are among the general possibilities of any normal human being). But what this reading seems to forget is the very fact that this early education, or moral (or immoral) training, came 'from the outside' in the first place: your parents, or educators, imposed that sort of behaviour and that sort of character on you. Children 'have no option' but to obey their father, or educator, any more than, in Aristotle's example, the man whose children are under the power of a tyrant. True enough, Aristotle insists as well on the importance of persuasion, so the child is led, so to speak, to act this or that way 'voluntarily'. But Aristotle also explicitly compares the force of that early education to the laws, and he does not hesitate to call the laws we must obey, 'necessity' (10.9, 1180a5). That is to say, if you adopt this strong view on early education, it is not possible to harmonize it with determinism any more than indeterminism. If a consistent theory of responsibility, be it determinist or indeterminist, is to be maintained in Aristotle's theory of ethics, another reading of this statement thus seems to be required.

As some interpreters have rightly seen, the examples of actions and dispositions Aristotle gives in 3.5 are those of adults. No young child is a drunkard or would be accused of ignoring the law. One might add that the answer he gave to another objection makes sense only if an adult is at stake. The objection is: what if a person does not realize that drinking a bottle of Metaxa every day will inevitably make him a drunkard, or, more generally, that such-and-such action will lead to leave you with such-and-such a character? And Aristotle answers: as anyone can see when it comes to physical performances, 'only a thoroughly stupid person could fail to know that the dispositions come about as a result of the sort of activity we display in relation to each kind of thing' (1114a9–10). It is evident that Aristotle means here a mature adult, who has had sufficient time to understand that one becomes such-and-such by practising such-and-such activities, just as only a mature adult would be able to realize that it was thanks to hard, and constant, practising that a runner had eventually become a victorious athlete in contests (which Aristotle explicitly refers to at 1114a8). This is the reason why the objection that the agent may lack control over his distraction, or distractive character, will not do: unless he is 'a thoroughly stupid person', or a mentally deficient person, he could have realized that his repeated behaviour would surely lead him to become such-and-such.

Now this answer has sometimes been sharply criticized by interpreters: how could we draw any clear cut difference between the age of children, and that of adults? Exactly when would responsibility begin then? Also, from a different perspective, why should we not say, as Aristotle seems to be inclined to say, that the acquisition of this trait is properly to be traced, ultimately, to early habituation? One might perfectly well realize that drinking a bottle of Metaxa every day could not help but be the quickest way to become an unrepentant drunkard, but what if I were given increasing doses of Metaxa in my bottle by my mother or father in order to keep me quiet? Or consider an example perhaps more familiar to Aristotle. A soldier who had participated in many battles, and who had constantly failed to carry out any courageous action on the battlefield, would be responsible for his becoming a coward, since he had the very capability to realize that he would end up a coward by acting consistently in that way.

And yet is it not the case, most of the time, that cowardice (just as any other disposition so closely linked to emotional reaction) very much depends on earlier habituation, and that such a soldier may have been inclined, that is, *determined*, to act that way because of, say, bad experiences of fear in his childhood?

The general path allowing us to defend Aristotle's argument is to say that in fact first education is not to be meant as absolutely directive, and necessarily determining. First of all, there are a few passages where Aristotle explicitly recognizes that a virtuous man can become wretched, and vice versa;[12] and there is at least one passage, in the *Politics*, where Aristotle very strongly says that:

T11: People 'do many things contrary to their habits and their nature'. (7.13, 1332b6–7)

To be sure, Aristotle also stresses the fact that a *phronimos*, who is also a *sôphron*, would never do anything bad, because he simply does not have any bad desire. And he also repeatedly says that an *akolastos*, relying on the very meaning of the word ('the incorrigible'), is a person who cannot be cured. But if the first set of statements is to be taken seriously, and not be rejected, or put aside, as inconsistent with the second, this implies, I think, that the picture of a perfect *phronimos* who never ever acts badly, or the totally *akolastos* who cannot but act badly, are just pure ideals who are actually never to be found in our real world.[13]

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[12] See *NE* 9.3, 1165b13–22, for the case of a virtuous person who has become vicious; *Cat.* 10, 13a17–31, for the reverse case: 'Again, in the case of contraries, it is possible that there should be changes from either into the other, while the subject retains its identity, unless indeed one of the contraries is a constitutive property of that subject, as heat is of fire. For it is possible that that which is healthy should become diseased, that which is white, black, that which is cold, hot, that which is good, bad, that which is bad, good. The bad man, if he is being brought into a better way of life and thought, may make some advance, however slight, and if he should once improve, even ever so little, it is plain that he might change completely, or at any rate make very great progress; for a man becomes more and more easily moved to virtue, however small the improvement was at first. It is, therefore, natural to suppose that he will make yet greater progress than he has made in the past; and as this process goes on, it will change him completely and establish him in the contrary state, provided he is not hindered by lack of time.'

[13] Note the way Aristotle expresses himself in the famous definition of virtue given in *NE* 2.6: 'Virtue, then, is a disposition issuing in decisions, depending on intermediacy of the kind relative to us, this being determined by rational prescription and in the way in which the wise person would determine it' (1106b36–1107a2). Aristotle does not say that you should behave as such and such *phronimos* actually does, but as a *phronimos* would do. In Book 6, he gives Pericles as a example of *phronimos*, but it is evident that since Pericles was certainly not a perfectly virtuous person, having all the virtues, and not having any bad appetites at all, Aristotle just wanted to refer to a well-known name who had some qualities that are required to have *phronesis*, in this case, a good deliberative skill (6, 1140b7–11). At 9.4, 1166a10–29, Aristotle describes the virtuous person's relationship with himself as realizing such a harmony between the different parts of his soul as that he never regrets anything, a pretty obvious way to say that such a person remains an ideal. An ideal, that is, which one should aim at, as Aristotle clearly indicates when after describing the terrible state of the bad persons, he protreptically concludes this chapter by urging his audience to 'strenuously try to avoid badness and attempt to be good' (1166b27–8).

Most people are. somewhere between *enkrateia*, that is, somebody who usually manages to control his bad appetites, and *akrasia*, that is somebody who usually cannot. This 'usually' at least leaves the door ajar to some uncertainty: the *enkratic*, as well as undoubtedly the *akratic*, have the very possibility of either amending themselves, or of falling into deeper wretchedness. In both cases, they should be able to act 'contrary to their habits or their nature', which presumably includes acting contrary to their early education.

There is another important passage along the same lines at the end of the *NE*, where Aristotle clearly states that our early education is only the very first part of the story:

> T12: Presumably it is not enough that people should be brought up and supervised correctly when they are young; on the contrary: since they must observe those patterns of behaviour, and be habituated to them, when they are grown men too, there will need to be laws covering these aspects too, and indeed covering the whole of life. (*NE* 10.9, 1180a1–4)

Aristotle is referring to average people who need laws to reinforce their virtuous behaviour. But it is natural to suppose that better people too (say, people who do not need such reinforcement by laws) need a continued education, and habituation. For unless one is a perfect *phronimos*—but that is just an ideal—one needs further habituation and education to become more virtuous; not only do *akratics* obviously need a lot of exercise in better fighting against their strong appetites, but also *enkratics*, which probably almost all of us are, need more training to make them able to remain capable to resist their bad appetites.

This passage makes it clear that there are two stages of education, one in childhood, and another in adulthood. If we link this passage with the previous one, it seems that there should be room in between, so to speak, for either a form of endorsement of earlier education, or a rejection of all or part of it. Earlier education cannot be 'all', as Aristotle seemed to say in T10, unless he contradicts himself here. Probably we should understand this overstatement from a rhetorical perspective: since he is addressing young citizens who will be soon in control over legislation in their city, he needs to emphasize the importance of early education. 'Be careful,' one can imagine Aristotle urging his students, 'If you do not give the youth a morally good upbringing, you will end up with highly *akratic* people who will not easily be cured!'

If we take T11 and T12 seriously into consideration, we thus have good reasons, it seems to me, to suppose that Aristotle saw the possibility of fulfilling the could-have-done-otherwise requirement in this time in between the two stages of education. It was at that very moment that the vicious person had the very possibility of acting otherwise, which would have had as a consequence his ameliorating himself. A young adult who lived through fearful experiences during his childhood would certainly be inclined to try to escape performing the sort of courageous actions which would lead him to become courageous.

But he, as a young soldier, certainly had the ability, Aristotle apparently holds, to refuse doing so, to say 'No' to that temptation, even if it may be a strong one.

But how should we understand this? What would give the young adult the ability to do so? The continuation of T11 gives us a very clear answer:

> T11*: People do many things contrary to their habits and their nature, because of reason, if they are persuaded that it is better to do otherwise. (*Pol.* 7.13, 1332b6–8)

Reason is the tool by which a vicious person can act contrary to his bad habits, and therefore; have the opportunity of reforming himself. Aristotle probably thinks that persuasion is greatly reinforced if provided by someone else, and this is one of the main reasons why he stresses the importance of *philia*, that one of the main functions of a virtuous *philos* (a friend, or relative) is providing such good advice. But he could certainly also have suggested that since any normal adult is able to reason by himself, he can perfectly well persuade himself that he should not accept the sort of bad habits he picked up in early childhood.

Now, provided one accepts such a reading, which implies that indeed any wrongdoer could have done otherwise, if he had taken the opportunity to reason, and persuaded himself to take the right path against his earlier education, that is, to try to perform right acts in order to become a better person, would such a reading be really convincing? As has been recently asked from a contemporary perspective (most recently Russell 2009: ch. 12), is such a backwards strategy viable? Even though one may accept that Aristotle saw a space for, say, rational self-determination either to endorse, or act against, our early education, how can we sensibly determine exactly when this was the case? And could such a moment, whenever it came, serve to fix the way we ascribe responsibility to an agent *now*?

Here again I think a literalist reading of Aristotle's argument cannot do justice to the text. As I have said, the 'could-have-done-otherwise' condition is a common sense requirement for responsibility, just as the expression 'you could have done otherwise' is the sort of thing we usually say when blaming someone. As Aristotle observed in T9, Achilles is praiseworthy because he refused to do the expedient and chose *instead* to act according to the *kalon*. Had he acted the other way around, we would have blamed him. Now we usually praise or blame someone for an *action* he has performed, not in the very moment he acts, but later. To take Aristotle's example from 3.5, the drunkard is blamed for having drunk that bottle of Metaxa *last night*, which consequentially left him senseless, which in turn caused his wrongdoing. In other words, the use of the past tense here is simply the result of our usually praising or blaming actions that have already been done. But with praise or blame for character it is different: here we certainly can, and probably usually do, praise or blame traits of character in the present tense: 'This is a shameful trait', we say, and we add, 'You can, and should, change it'. In other words, justification for the responsibility for one's character is not backwards anymore, but present, or even prospective: since right now you have the very capability of changing the way you behave yourself, you are responsible for your character.

But could we attribute such a view to Aristotle? Would he really endorse not simply a 'could-have-done-otherwise' condition but also a 'can do otherwise' condition as regards character? At first sight, my suggestion just seems hopeless: after all, he says that, like a stone you have thrown away and can no longer retrieve, you now have no option to be ill or not, or to be morally such and such. You *had* the option to 'make' your character, in the space in between the two stages of education, but now it is too late. This seems to be the most obvious reading of the passage. Yet some interpreters (for example, Irwin 1999: 209–10) have rightly recognized, I think, that such a reading overemphasizes the importance of the comparison of states of character to a thrown stone or an illness. To be sure, one cannot bring back the stone one has just thrown away, and it is impossible for the person who did not obey his doctor not to be ill. But there is no need to take Aristotle to be saying more than that it is now impossible to recover instantly, at will, from illness; and there is no reason to infer that being now ill, or *akratic*, is definitively incurable, even though it is true that you cannot get well or put it right overnight.

I have thus suggested we should extend the 'could-have-done-otherwise' condition to the present tense. At least, our chapter 5 text does not preclude our so extending it. And, more positively, other passages seem even to support this extension. If we are to take seriously the idea that our moral training is the matter of a whole life, it should be also true that we can change our character in the better, or the worse, way, even though it cannot be done overnight. We are therefore responsible for our character in so far as it is 'up to us' to change it or not, to improve ourselves or not. For, in so far as we can use our reason, we can endorse, or take a critical distance from, our acquired habits, and as T11 clearly suggest, this is what people can do all life long.

So reason is the faculty thanks to which we can take critical distance from our acquired habits. Yet this might be perfectly in line with a deterministic view on responsibility. According to Socrates, a vicious person may certainly be able to change his bad behaviour, provided he is rationally persuaded to do so. But this should not presuppose any incompatibilist requirement; the Socratic theory of motivation may perfectly well be understood as a rational determinism: as soon as the vicious person has firmly understood that his vice is no good (for him), he will consequently, and necessarily, be acting otherwise.[14] But Aristotle's reference to reason in T11 should not be taken as a purely intellectualistic stance, as if rational persuasion were the only way to improve oneself. For such a reading would clash with the typically Aristotelian stress on emotional habituation. In fact, that critical distance should be accompanied by a sort of

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[14] See Penner (2005), who offers a very powerful defence of such a reading.

'counter-habituation', as Kraut has put it (2007: 13), which Aristotle seems to have very clearly recognized:

> T13: And we should consider the things that we ourselves are more readily drawn towards, for different people have different natural inclinations; and this is something we will be able to recognize from the pleasure and the pain that things bring about in us. We should drag ourselves away in the contrary direction; for by pulling far away from error we shall arrive at the intermediate point, in the way people do when they straight bent wood. (*NE* 2.9, 1109b1–7)

To be sure, Aristotle is here primarily referring to natural propensities, that is, to defects we would have from birth. And it is worth noting that this comparison with a piece of wood to be straightened is without any reasonable doubt an allusion to Plato's *Protagoras*, where Protagoras presents the common idea that parents and educators have to educate young children with force, even violence.[15] Yet the context here is quite different: Aristotle does not refer to young children, but he is addressing his own reader, that is, young adults. It is therefore very plausible that the 'natural propensities' also refer to what we call our 'second nature', that is, the early habituation we have gained from childhood, rather than our sole natural constitution strictly speaking.[16] The question Aristotle raises in the context is how best to advise people (his readers as well as anyone willing to become more virtuous) to hit the mean properly, that is to exercise their intellectual ability to reason about the best way to do such and such act according to the circumstances. In brief, Aristotle says, we must refrain from indulging our natural, and early acquired 'inclinations', that is, our desires to do such and such which would prevent us to find the right mean. It is difficult to find the right mean, Aristotle often repeats, and this is why, he emphatically says, 'doing well is something rare, praiseworthy, and noble' (2.9, 1109 a 29–30). This difficulty is not primarily intellectual though, as the context and the example of anger indicate. It is easy, Aristotle explains (at 1109 a 26–9) to get angry or to spend money; but it is a difficult task to be justly angry at someone who really deserves it, or to be generous when somebody needs it. This certainly requires some intellectual abilities, as the analogy with the geometer who must be knowledgeable to find the center of a circle, seems to indicate (a 25–6). But in order to be able to exercise this ability, Aristotle gives what seems to be an advice of great importance: the best way to make sure we avoid the extremes is to consider to what kind of extremes we ourselves are (probably naturally) the most inclined to, by 'primarily guarding against pleasure' (1109b7–8). In other words, discovering the right mean is a difficult task on its own, but then additionally one should fight against not only one's own tendencies but also, and most importantly, against our natural propensity toward physical pleasure (or avoidance of pain) in order to be able to exercise our *phronesis*, and all the other intellectual abilities linked to it.

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[15] 'They teach and admonish them from earliest childhood till the last day of their lives. As soon as one of them grasps what is said to him, the nurse, the mother, the tutor, and the father himself strive hard that the child may excel, and as each act and word occurs they teach and impress upon him that this is just, and that unjust, one thing noble, another base, one holy, another unholy, and that he is to do this, and not do that. If he readily obeys—so; but if not, they treat him as a bent and twisted piece of wood and straighten him with threats and blows' (*Prot.* 325c–d).

[16] This is from, and against, Kraut (2007) who claims that nature, here, would only refer to early habituation. This is unlikely to be the case, it seems to me, since in the following bit of text (1109b7–12), Aristotle insists that we also should resist our natural propensity to pleasure.

5. A final objection, and some difficulties

The last objection (1114a31–b25) Aristotle wants to face is in fact an in-depth, second look at the previous one. The previous one (1114a3–31) was: what if that person who acted in ignorance because of her carelessness, *is* a careless person because this trait, acquired from early on, has become like 'second nature'? Here, it seems to me, Aristotle is pushing this objection to 'nature' in the strict sense of the term: what if such and such a bad trait is a natural fact, ingrained in the person from birth on?

Plato, following Socrates, held that everyone tends toward what he takes to be good, or what appears to him to be good. But the way one sees the good (whether this turns out to be really good, or is only apparently so) depends on the kind of person he is, that is, his character. A vicious person will consider this action (or some quality it has) as a good to be pursued, whereas the virtuous person will not because he knows it is in fact bad. And this vicious person, Plato concludes (again following Socrates), since he does not know that this is the case, is not responsible for that action, or for his pursuing that quality.

Against this, Aristotle begins by repeating the main thesis he has been defending so far in this chapter: if it is true that we are responsible for the way we are, there is no reason to think that we would not be responsible for the way things appear to be good, or bad, since that depends on the character we have. To see the form that this reply would take in a particular case, consider Achilles again. Recall that in T9, Achilles was presented as an example of a virtuous person who chooses to seek the noble instead of the expedient. But in the *Poetics* Achilles is presented as a paradigmatic case of stubborn-mindedness (15, 1454b14). So let us suppose that Achilles as a consequence is someone for whom revenge 'looks like' the sort of thing that should be pursued at all costs, and that's why he chooses it. According to the Socratic objection, Achilles cannot be held responsible for his *phantasia*, for how revenge 'looks' to him, since (perhaps) he received the sort of training in heroism in his childhood which was calculated to make him someone for whom revenge at all costs is a central good. Achilles simply is ignorant that revenge itself is no good; he could not know any better because of his early education, and therefore he could not have done otherwise. According to Aristotle, one should reply that, indeed, he could have done otherwise, because he could have chosen when arriving at adulthood to reject that trait which he had acquired from his education, and, by reasoning, and exercising 'counter-habituation', he could have instead acted to reform himself in the appropriate way.

But the objection, we may infer from the rest of the text, is in fact intended to go deeper than just this. 'Let us now admit for the sake of the argument', the objection implicitly runs, 'that Achilles is responsible for his educationally ingrained character, and his willingness to take revenge at all costs, since it was up to him, when young adult, to endorse or refuse such a trait'. But', the objector asks, 'what if this trait of character is *naturally* ingrained?' What if, as Plato suggests in the *Republic*, Achilles was a man who by his very nature seeks revenge at all costs, because he was born with a *thumos* run amok (see Hobbs 2000: 199)? This, I believe, is the point of the objection raised in the following text:

> T14: But he does these things because of ignorance of the end, thinking that by means of them he will get what is best: in this case aiming at the end will not be self-chosen, but one must be born with the capacity for a kind of sight by which to discriminate well and choose what is truly good, and the person who has this capacity by nature will be the one who counts as 'naturally well-endowed'; for it is the greatest and finest of things, and something it will not be possible to get from anyone else, or to learn from anyone—rather, one will have it in just the form in which it was born in one, and to have been born well and beautifully endowed in this respect will be to be naturally well-endowed in the full and true sense (1114b4–12)

So let us take this to be the objection that Aristotle is now facing: what if this ignorance comes from nature? This objection is the strong deterministic reply to the answer Aristotle has just provided to the previous objection. Aristotle has just said that we are responsible for our ignorance, and our carelessness, because we could have chosen, in our early adulthood, to perform actions which would have led to our acquiring a more diligent character. But the objector objects that this reply will not do, if the agent's carelessness is a natural, inborn trait.

The objector, all interpreters have said, is certainly Plato.[17] Or at least, Aristotle could easily reconstruct such an objection from what Plato says in the *Timaeus*, where he says that the *phantasia*, and therefore the way the good appears, depends on the way we are constituted *by nature* (70e–71a). *Akrasia*, he also says there, can be explained by the constitution of the body, and it is for this very reason that *akrasia* is involuntary.[18] And conversely, to be virtuous also depends on some natural gift, as Plato emphasizes in the *Republic*, when repeating that the future guardians must have a 'philosophic nature' (*philosophos phusis*, see *Rep.* 2, 375e; 7, 485a).

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[17] Inwood (1985: 54) has suggested that Gorgias may be also implicitly referred to here; in his *Defence of Helen*, he gives a similar excuse: Helen should not be blamed because she was 'compelled' by the force of various visual stimuli (see especially 15–19). This is not impossible, although I would rather take Gorgias' famous text as a sort of general background against which the subsequent ancient dispute over responsibility took place.

Now the way Aristotle takes up this radical challenge is rather curious. The easiest way he could have done so would have been to prove that, in fact, a virtuous person cannot be such because of nature. As he has repeatedly said in Book 2, to become virtuous requires training. And, if so, providing training in adulthood is ultimately a matter of choice, because you could always at least have said No to a previously acquired trait; thus being virtuous is 'up to you', and so is wickedness. But this is not how he proceeds here. On the contrary, his strategy is rather to endorse, at least in a certain way (which I shall specify in a moment), Plato's view of the naturalness of virtuousness, and to argue that, even if we admit with Plato that virtue is a natural phenomenon, and that therefore we in no sense choose our ends, it is still true that we are responsible for them, and for our virtuous character, since we nevertheless act voluntarily.

So, Aristotle asks Plato, why do you consider the two cases as different in terms of voluntariness, and therefore responsibility? Take the bad person who does not know what is really good because he is naturally stupid, or stubborn, and take the good person who is *euphues*: neither of them have 'chosen' their end, that is, the way they consider things to be good. Their respective cases are exactly the same: they do not choose their ends, since they have been given to them by nature. So why make such a difference? For consistency Plato should have said that good and bad people must be held responsible for their actions, if he recognizes that the good person is, since there is no difference between the two cases. Otherwise we would have to hold that the good person is not responsible for his actions, and therefore not praiseworthy, which would sound very odd indeed!

Thus, if there is no reason not to think that the same analysis is to be provided in the case of wickedness as in the case of virtue, there is no reason either to think that we should not hold wicked people responsible for their wickedness, even though they are not the causes of their ends. Plato, therefore, has offered a paradoxical theory. We must claim against him that people are responsible for their virtue, as well as for their wretchedness, even in cases where the ends according to which they act are given by nature:

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[18] 'In truth, this sexual incontinence, which is due for the most part to the abundance and fluidity of one substance because of the porosity of the bones, constitutes a disease of the soul. And indeed almost all those affections which are called by way of reproach "incontinence in pleasure", as though the wicked acted voluntarily, are wrongly so reproached; for no one is voluntarily wicked, but the wicked man becomes wicked by reason of some evil condition of body and unskilled nurture, and these are experiences which are hateful to everyone and involuntary... thus it comes to pass that all of us who are wicked become wicked owing to two quite involuntary causes' (*Timaeus* 86d–87).

> T15: For whether the end appears to us by nature, or however its appearance is to be explained, it appears and is fixed in the same way for both, i.e. the good person and the bad one, and since they act by referring everything else to the end, the same explanation—whatever it is—will apply to their action. Whether, then, it is not by nature that the end appears to each person in whatever form it does, but this is also to an extent under his control, or whether the end is natural, but because the good person acts voluntarily in all other respects, his excellence is voluntary—in either case badness too will be no less voluntary; for 'through him' (*to di' auton*) applies to the bad person too, in respect of his actions even if not of his end. If, then, as people say, the excellences are voluntary (for we ourselves are co-responsible, in a way (*sunaitioi pôs autoi esmen*), for our dispositions, and it is by virtue of being people of a certain sort that we suppose the end to be of a certain sort), bad states too will be voluntary; for they come about in a similar way. (1114b16–25)

This passage has been taken by most incompatibilists as a sign that Aristotle was not at all clear about his own incompatibilist stance, whereas it has been seen by compatibilists as confirmation that Aristotle was indeed a determinist. For it seems to be the case that Aristotle provides a deterministic picture here: even if our ends are given by nature, he seems to be saying, it suffices that we accomplish our actions voluntarily—that is (as it seems we must suppose), without being forced from the outside, and with knowledge of the circumstances—to be held responsible for them, and more generally for our virtue. But not only that: Aristotle also speaks now of 'co-responsibility' (*sunaitios*: co-cause, or co-responsible), instead of responsibility *tout court*. And in a way it comes as no surprise: if it is true that we cannot be the cause of our ends, since they are given by nature, we cannot be fully responsible for them either. But what does Aristotle mean by a 'co-cause'? In a passage from the *De An.* (2.4, 416a9–18, compare *Meta.* 4.5, 1015a21), Aristotle says that matter is the co-cause of growth in living beings, meaning by this that it is only a 'concomitant' cause; its formal cause is the main cause of a living being's growing. So a 'co-cause' is one of two co-causes, where one may be primary and the other secondary. But what is the other cause which is supposed here, besides the agent? Here it seems to be beyond reasonable doubt that the other cause is nature, and also early education (as our 'second nature') since Aristotle also refers to the latter (see 1114b14, 16).

Compatibilists take the passage as confirmation of their interpretation, since on such a view an agent can in no way be the ultimate cause of his character, and so someone who held such a view would say that an agent is merely 'co-responsible' for his character. And, indeed, if one reads this term as having the same sense as in the *De An.* passage (which follows in fact Plato's usage of the term in the *Timaeus*, 46c–d), the passage means that nature is the main cause, whereas man is only a sort of concomitant, or helping cause; man is co-responsible in the weak sense that, when he himself is the cause of his actions, then he is, as I said, the way nature (or early education) express themselves through him.

But if we grant the weight of the arguments raised earlier against a compatibilist interpretation, we should reject such a reading of the present passage. Thus, most incompatibilist interpreters have denied that Aristotle in the end endorses what he is stating: Aristotle, they say, is just replying *ad hominem* and is only trying to force Plato to accept that, if one admits that virtuous action is voluntary, then so is vicious action. Even granted that virtue and vice are natural, and that we cannot be the cause of our ends, or our character, it should be admitted that we voluntarily act, and therefore that we are responsible for our bad as well as for our good actions. The dichotomy thesis is thus refuted, but this would not imply that Aristotle in this passage was intending to offer any serious argument for his own view of responsibility (see Gauthier and Jolif 1958–9: II, 216; endorsed by Furley 1977: 52).

Yet it seems to me that this interpretative strategy should be rejected, since it fails to account for the fact that Aristotle, immediately before arguing against the dichotomy thesis, seems to be fully admitting just such a qualified responsibility. For in reply to the objection as it is first expressed, his answer is:

T16: Well, if each of us is himself somehow responsible for causing (*pôs aitios*) his disposition in himself, he will also be somehow responsible (*pôs aitios*) for the appearance in question. (114b1–3)

In other words, Aristotle seems to be admitting from the beginning that when he was speaking earlier in this chapter about responsibility for one's character, he was not intending to attribute for each case 'full responsibility' to the agent, but only a 'qualified responsibility'.[19]

Moreover, a second fact that such a reading fails to take into account is that Aristotle himself, in some other passages, clearly endorses the idea that a good natural endowment (*euphuïa*) is also a part of the story of how someone in typical circumstances acquires virtue; or at the very least, Aristotle seems to think that having a natural propensity to virtue is a basic condition for becoming virtuous, as it is the case with an athlete who cannot become an athlete without any natural gift.[20]

I therefore want to suggest that the strong deterministic objection Aristotle faces is in fact an objection which he additionally makes to himself, as it were, given his own endorsement of this common view that nature also is to be taken into account; he does not conceive of it as arising solely on premises that Plato alone would accept. His reply is therefore not (or not only) to be read as *ad hominem* against Plato. Yet how are we to make sense of it if we are to reject such a strong determinist reading?

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[19] An additional argument for the *ad hominem* interpretation would be to stress on the fact that the term *sunaitios* is taken from Plato; Aristotle, thus, would here just be using this term (which does not reappear in the rest of the *NE*, nor in his *EE*) in order to reply to Plato with his own terms. But this would be a very unnatural reading of the parenthesis (b22–4) which is obviously to be taken as the explanation Aristotle provides as to why people are right in saying that virtues are voluntary.

[20] See especially *NE* 6.13, 1144b4–6: 'For everyone thinks each of the various sorts of character traits belongs to us in some sense by nature—because we are just, moderate in our appetites, courageous, and the rest from the moment we are born.'

The whole passage, it seems to me, presents two main problems. Firstly, at the very beginning (1114b2, and 3), why does Aristotle speak of responsibility 'in a way' (*pôs*) instead of responsibility *tout court*, in a passage where he seems to be merely reiterating what he has just been arguing for in the preceding section? Secondly, how should we understand his seeming to accept that we merely need to act voluntarily, without being the cause of our ends, in order to be held responsible for our action? This is puzzling given that he concludes in the end that we are co-responsible, in a way, for those ends, or our dispositions, which he in the previous section held are necessary for the responsibility of our actions.

The first worry can be resolved easily enough, I think. The reason why Aristotle now admits that we are responsible for our character 'in a way' is to be understood from what he has just established: we are responsible for our character because it was up to us to act this or that way, which formed our character, and which consequently determined the way we 'see' things as good. But it is true that one cannot change it overnight, and this is the reason why right now an agent is responsible for his character only 'in a way'. Aristotle, in other words, uses this qualifying adverb because the word *aitios* means both cause and responsible, and he holds, as we have seen, that an agent is a cause of something only if he is *kurios* over it, that is, he has it 'within his power' or it's 'under his control'. By adding the qualifying 'in a way', he wishes to signify that we are responsible for our character, and our *phantasia*, since it was up to us to act in a way which has led to these, even though right now we do not in the strict sense have them 'in our power'.

Aristotle's making such a qualification is not unimportant: it prepares us, so to speak, to admit that we may be 'co-responsible, in a way', for something that we cannot change overnight, which is most obviously the case with early education, and natural constitution.

Let us now try to solve the second problem. How should we relate the idea that someone is co-responsible for his character to the thesis, apparently endorsed by Aristotle, that an agent may be held responsible for his acts even if not for his ends? At first sight this sounds completely paradoxical: how could Aristotle say in the same breath that we are co-responsible for our character, and not responsible for our ends? But a close reading should clear up such apparent inconsistency. What Aristotle says is that a good or a bad person cannot be the cause of her ends (literally: it is not 'through her' that the ends have come to her) because those ends have been given to her by nature (or by early education). And so the person cannot be responsible, that is, fully responsible, for her ends, or her character; so it is very true, Aristotle seems to be admitting with his objector, that 'aiming at the end will not be self-chosen', using the very strong word *authairetos*.[21] But the person must be fully responsible for her acts, since we can fully apply the expression 'through her' to her acts. If, thus, there is no reason to make any difference between bad and good acts, it means that people are responsible of their bad as well as good acts. Now, Aristotle continues, you, Plato (as well as any other people) take virtue, or virtuous character, to be voluntary, since nobody would be involuntarily virtuous, or happy (see 1113b14–15); by the same logic as in the case of actions, having a bad character must therefore also be voluntary. Yet if one is to avoid flat contradiction here, one must explain why, or in what sense, virtue (and vice) are voluntary, and imply responsibility. This is why, I submit, Aristotle adds this crucial explanation: 'for we ourselves are co-responsible, in a way, for our dispositions'. This is Aristotle's explanation why he agrees with his objector that indeed virtue is voluntary, and therefore we are responsible for our traits of character, even if we have acquired them by nature.

Yet how are we to understand this? In what precise sense are we 'co-responsible' for our character, and our ends? It is true, as I recalled earlier, that the adjective *sunaitios* is sometimes used by Plato, and Aristotle, to mean a 'concomitant' cause in a physical context. But here the context is quite different; in fact, I suggest, Aristotle is here simply taking up, and endorsing, a very common way to speak of a person who is either an accessory to a certain deed, or an accomplice in a crime, and therefore only partly responsible for it, as opposed to the main author of something who is fully accountable. If this word appears only here with this sense in Aristotle's work, we do find it a certain number of times by the orators, and, also in Plato's *Gorgias*, in a quasi-juridical context.[22]

If we apply this here, we get the following picture: in cases of natural traits of character (or the ones we have gotten from very early education), it may be well true that we are only partially responsible for them, as in cases of people who have not directly committed the crime, but who, in a way or in another, helped perform it. As it is the case before a court, you, as accomplice in a crime, are certainly accountable for it, and punishable, yet not as fully, and as heavily, as in the case of the actual murderer. In other words, in his theory of responsibility for one's character, Aristotle simply takes into account the common practice of any jury in court: depending on the way you are involved in a crime, your responsibility may not be full responsibility. Responsibility admits of degree, Aristotle seems to be accepting: in case of traits you have acquired when young adult (like becoming a drunkard, provided your parents did not give you Metaxa in your bottle), you are without any doubt fully responsible for them; in cases of early acquired traits, or naturally ingrained ones, you are qualifiedly responsible for them. But this qualified responsibility is certainly still responsibility. As in the case of the accomplice who participates in a crime by helping the murderer, or just by refusing to prevent it, we are, Aristotle suggests, the 'accessories' to our bad, as well as good, naturally ingrained (or early acquired) traits since we have in a way or in another endorsed them. And, he also suggests, we are responsible for them since it is always up to us to act this or that way. For by acting such and such a way, we endorse such and such an end, we 'make' them ours, even though we have not 'created' them in the first place.

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[21] On this, see Zingano (2007: 317–19). It is worth noting that this word (which does not appear in Plato, and which appears nowhere else in Aristotle) is found in Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus*, where Oedipus laments: 'I have suffered the greatest misery, strangers,—suffered it through unintended (*aekôn*) deeds—may the god know it! No part was on my own choice (*ouden authaireton*)' (522–4). Even if the word also appears in Thucydides and Xenophon, it is not impossible that this may be a sort of implicit reference to Sophocles, or at least to the tragic world view where heroes do not choose their ends, but are under the gods' fate.

[22] See e.g. Demosthenes, *Speeches* 18, 212, and 19, 97; Isocrates, *On Exchange* 96. In *Gorgias* 519b, Socrates predicts to Callicles that he (and Alcibiades) might be 'blamed' sometime in the future for the city's ills, 'even though you are not responsible for their ills but perhaps accessories to them (*ouk aitiôn... all' isôs sunaitiôn*)'. See also Aeschylus, *Agamemnon* 1116 for a metaphorical meaning of 'accomplice'.

In his commentary on this passage (1114b21–4), Aspasius writes this:

> T17: Aristotle did not say that all people are simply responsible for their habitual states but rather that they are co-responsible, perhaps attributing something also to nature, but a small amount which can be submitted to correction, and perhaps too something to chance, by having fallen in with wicked people from the beginning. But nevertheless in all these cases the greatest part is ours, in choosing to practise noble or shameful things (79,33–80,3; transl. Konstan mod.)

As we have seen, all interpreters have rightly followed Aspasius who suggested that we see nature, and early education (or what he calls 'chance', that is, cultural contingency) as the second cause involved in this co-cause, or co-responsibility. To be sure, Aspasius understands that word *sunaitios* in a quite different way from how it is used in the *De Anima* passage we quoted, as here we have the idea that the co-cause is in fact the main one. But, as Aspasius seems to have seen, this is imposed by the very logic of the argument: it is because the good, as well as the wicked person, act voluntarily that they are co-responsible for their respective character even though they are not the cause of their ends, properly speaking. You may not be the cause of your ends, but you are still at least 'co-responsible' for them since you are acting voluntarily—that is, Aspasius explains, because you have the choice of acting well or badly. You are not the cause of your ends, as they are natural (or given by early education), but as you may act in this or that way, you are nevertheless co-responsible for them. And this is the case, because by acting this or that way, you will endorse, or act contrary to, your ends. As Aristotle has just said, 'whether the end appears to us by nature, or however its appearance is to be explained, it appears and is fixed in the same way for both, i.e. the good person and the bad one, and...they act by referring everything else to the end'. I take this 'reference' to mean that by choosing such and such an action to perform (or in Aristotle's vocabulary, the 'means toward the end'), the agent at the same time 'shows' his commitment to that end. When Achilles chose to kill Hector the way he did, he showed his disposition for revenge at all costs. Whether he may have gotten such a bad trait from early education, or else from nature, his responsibility is fully engaged; as Aspasius would have said, he had the choice of acting in such a way, that is, to show his commitment to seeking revenge at all costs, instead of refusing to do so.

Yet, to return to the determinist objection I left unanswered at the end of my section 3, it is the case that Aristotle typically holds that choice essentially consists in finding the best way to achieve some given end, and that the desire to find this very way follows from, so to speak, or instantiates, the desire we have for that end. And this explains why Aristotle can consistently say that when such and such an end is given, the person will necessarily and immediately act according to it. As he very clearly says in the famous chapter 7.3 on *akrasia*, an incorrigible glutton who thinks that he should eat whatever sweet he encounters, and who has such a corresponding desire, will necessarily and immediately take and eat this appealing piece of cake that happens to be in front of him (see 1147a29–31). Contrary to what has been asserted from an incompatibilist point of view (Sorabji 1980: 38–241), this example is not at all exceptional: it illustrates the fact that given a certain end, or desire, the agent just acts according to this end, or desire. It is therefore hopeless, so the determinist objection runs, to speak here of the could-have-done-otherwise requirement: when confronted with the choice how he will kill Hector, Achilles just sought the 'best' way to quench his thirst for revenge; according to his own theory, Aristotle could not have possibly said that Achilles could have chosen otherwise, given the kind of person he was.

I agree with this obvious reading of Aristotle's explanation of action, and that the glutton example is not to be seen as an exceptional case. But contrary to appearances, I do not think that this should undermine the incompatibilist interpretation I have tried to defend. As we have seen, what Aristotle suggests in various passages, is that you can change your character, that is, the desire you have for such and such an end; by reasoning, you must be able to reflect on these ends, and by 'counter-habituation', you can habituate yourself to act (and, we may suppose, also emotionally react) in such and such a different way. But this is not going to happen overnight; on the contrary, as T13 on 'counterhabituation' obviously implies, such a process takes a certain time. So contrary perhaps to what a first reading of T11 might suggest, people may act against their habits, and their 'nature', but this cannot happen immediately: you must first take a critical distance from your usual way of seeing things, and decide to change your bad habits in order to be able to act, or react, in a better way. It may therefore be true that Achilles could not have done otherwise at the very moment he decided to kill Hector. In this regard, Aristotle is not to be seen as a strong libertarian who believes that you may choose to act this or that way, independently of any more general, or prior, desire. But when acting in such and such a way, Achilles has showed his commitment to a certain end, and since this end can be reflected on, and modified, it remains true that he could have done otherwise, if only he had taken the pain to reflect on his end. When he decided to withdraw from the battlefield, Achilles might not, strictly speaking, have the 'free choice' to act otherwise given his strong desire for revenge at all costs (in this case, the revenge for being despised by Agamemnon). But now that Patrocles has died, we can see (in Book 18 of the *Iliad* that Aristotle is referring to in our T9 *Rhetoric* passage) that Achilles regrets what he has done, when realizing the dreadful consequences his withdrawal from the battlefield has had on Patrocles, and his other comrades:

> T18: Let it [death] follow instantly, since I could not save my friend from death. He needed my help to stave off ruin, and now far from his own land has he fallen. May discord be banished from among gods and men, all that enrages a man despite his wisdom, that insidious anger that rises in the breast like smoke, sweeter to it than trickling honey, for I shall not now return home, and I have failed to protect Patroclus and all those others whom noble Hector killed, idling here by my ships, a useless burden on the earth, I who am without peer in warfare among the bronze-clad Greeks, however superior the rest may be in council. Agamemnon, king of men, stirred just such a rage in my heart. But all is past and done, despite the pain, and it is necessary to control the wrath in our hearts. So I will go now and find Hector, the man who killed my dearest friend, and accept death whenever Zeus and the other gods decide that I must die. (*Iliad* 18, 98–116; transl. mod. A. S. Kline)

The most natural way of reading these verses seems to be this: Achilles is regretting his past deeds, but he is not really blaming himself; it was discord (*eris*), which is regularly presented by Homer as a sort of personified entity, that enraged him despite his wisdom, and 'made' him choose to withdraw from the battlefield. And now that Patrocles is dead, there is no other choice—it is a necessity, Homer seems to be saying—that he now controls his wrath in his heart, and take the decision to go and kill Hector, which will inevitably lead him to his own death. But this rather complex text also allows for quite different ways of reading. A 'soft' determinist way of reading would be to argue that in fact Achilles is only explaining why he acted that way: it was because of his 'rage' (*cholos*) against Agamemnon that he decided to withdraw. But this should not excuse him: in fact, Achilles seems to be recognizing his own responsibility as he admits he himself acted that way, and he blames himself (I am, he says, 'a useless burden on the earth') for not helping his friend, and his other comrades killed by Hector. Yet this should not imply any other requirement, like our incompatibilist 'could-have-done-otherwise': Achilles was fully determined to act the way he did, because of the rage, and the desire for revenge he had.

Now if we take seriously our *Rhetoric* passage, where Achilles is praised for choosing the noble instead of the expedient, while this latter choice was actually available to him, we can safely enough presume that Aristotle must have read this *Iliad* passage in yet another way: Achilles is blaming himself for staying away from the battlefield, and for not helping his comrades when attacked by Hector, essentially because he now realizes that since he actually is the best fighter in the Greek army, he could have saved them all—provided he had decided to refrain from indulging the sweetness of the feeling that revenge procures! His deep regrets, his bitterness against himself, are not caused by his bare recognition that it was him, and no one else, who withdrew, but by the awareness that he could have refrained from such an indulgence, and therefore he could have saved his comrades. In Aristotle's eyes, we may suppose, Achilles is like the akratic depicted in *NE* 3.3: his very strong desire for the sweetness of revenge actually blinded his 'wisdom', or the knowledge of his practical reason,[23] and, as it is the case with the *akolastos* glutton, he may not have had another choice at that very moment either; but he is still responsible for his own *akrasia*, or 'blindness', since he could have decided to fight against such a tendency (be it inculcated in him since early age, or from nature) instead of indulging it. Patrocles' death is a kind of wake up call, even though it is now too late, as he finally decides to control his *thumos*.[24]

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[23] I endorse the 'traditional' way of reading this famous passage, which I defend in Destrée (2007).

[24] A last compatibilist objection (raised by Ben Morison) is this: Suppose that there were an ideally virtuous person, who lacked any kind of internal conflict, and therefore inevitably acted from his virtuous ends: it would seem that there would be no meaningful sense in which he could have done otherwise, and, if so, then, on the view that has been defended here, he turns out to be not responsible for any of his (virtuous) actions. As already stated, I don't think that Aristotle thought it be practically possible for anyone to have an ideally virtuous character, but even so the case poses no real difficulty. As one might surmise from 2.9, 1109a29–30, such a completely virtuous character could not but be the consequence of a long, difficult, rare—and therefore praiseworthy—course of character education, which would involve of course cooperation on the part of the person educated, and would include such things as: the choice of a virtuous life, and the repeated decision to stick to one's commitment (see 2.4, 1105a33). Here there are many acts and decisions which one might have done otherwise in the first place, and one could have renounced one's resolution at any point along this long and difficult road. Now one might still object that this reply will not suffice in the doubly hypothetical case of a person who is not only ideally virtuous but also naturally virtuous: if you were born virtuous, you not only do not need to struggle to acquire or to persevere in virtue, you would apparently not even need to choose that kind of life—and yet doesn't Aristotle say in the last bit of our chapter that in a case of natural virtue, or naturally given noble ends, someone's simply acting in a virtuous way suffices for him to be held responsible for his action, and therefore co-responsible for his character? However, this case incorporates two aspects which need to be dealt with differently. As regards a person with natural gifts for virtue, Aristotle could say that his acting in a virtuous way requires his endorsing those virtuous ends—since that person is not perfectly virtuous, he would still need to decide himself to adopt such a commitment, which makes him responsible for his character and actions. On the other hand, as regards someone who is by nature a perfectly virtuous person, Aristotle, it seems, could concede the point and just say that responsibility does not really apply here, any more than in the case of naturally 'brutish' people who are not responsible for their hopelessly wretched character (see 7.1, 1145a15–33, and 1148b19–1149a20): such 'divine' human beings who perhaps can be imitated as unattainable ideals for us (see 1.12) would not deserve our praise, but should be honored in the same way we honour the gods.

Aristotle, it seems to me, took the expression 'he could have done otherwise' for a common way of justifying the idea of meriting praise and blame, and responsibility, and he tried to make sense of it. And he also took for granted the common idea that we must also be responsible for our character traits if it is true that we must be responsible for our actions, and our actions are an expression of these traits. The incompatibilist (yet not strong libertarian) explanation he offers, as I have tried to reconstruct it, thus reflects his typical way of doing: he has saved the common views on responsibility while philosophically refining them.

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